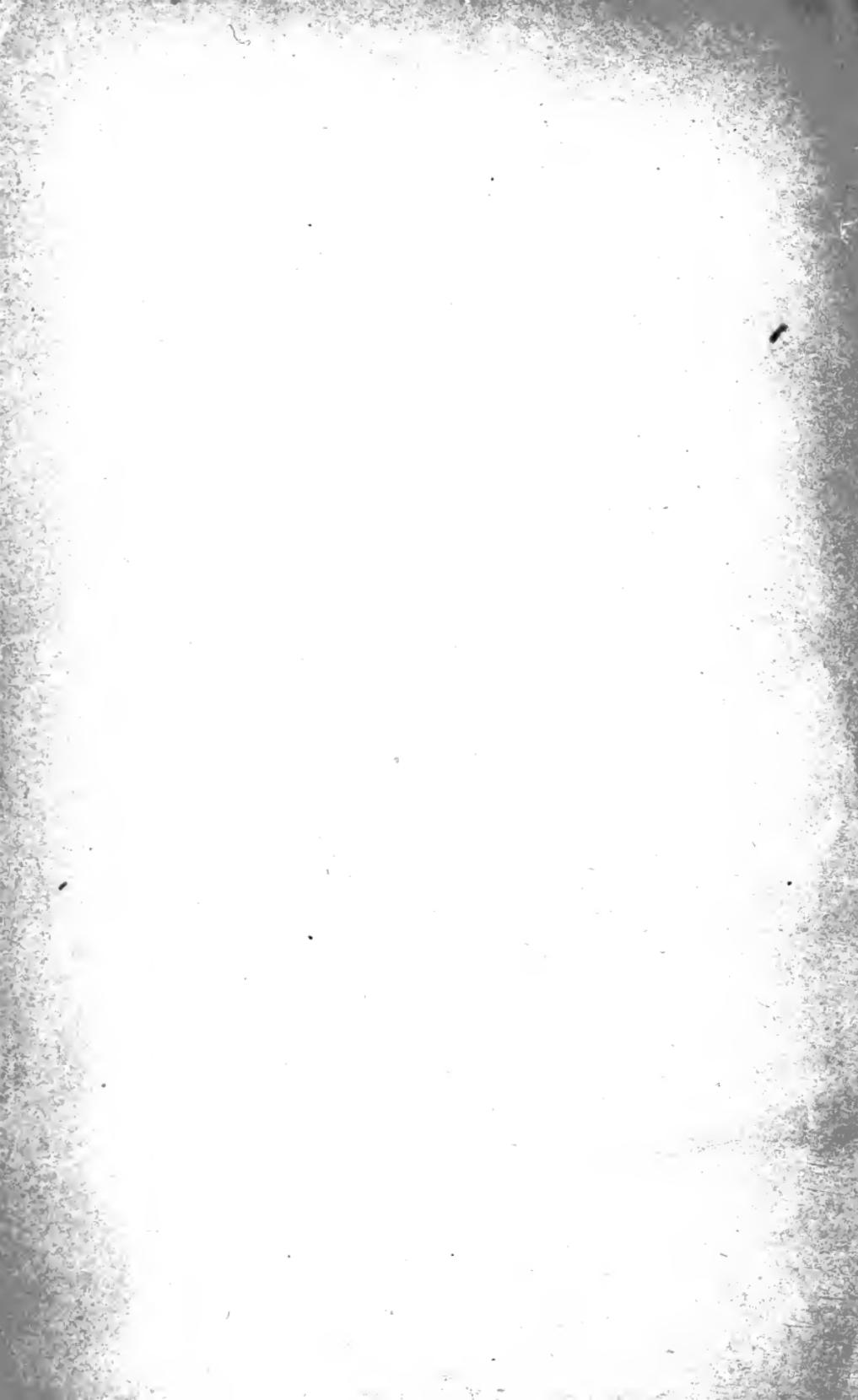


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THE  
HUGUENOT FAMILY.

BY SARAH TYTLER,

AUTHOR OF "CITOYENNE JACQUELINE," ETC.

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TO  
E L S P E T H,  
OF WHOM HER FRIENDS MUST THINK,  
BECAUSE SHE DOES NOT  
THINK OF HERSELF,  
IN AFFECTIONATE ACNOWLEDGMENT  
OF ALL HER CARE AND KINDNESS  
AND PURE SYMPATHY.



# THE HUGUENOT FAMILY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GRAND'MERE DUPUY'S OPINION OF THE ENGLISH.

“YOLANDE, my child, we must make friends with the people about us. I am desolate here without my children, my poor, who used to come to the châtelet and suffer themselves to be served on Saturday.”

“If you are desolate, grand’mère, what are we? Why, you always remind me of the singing-birds which abound in this England, one of the few good things we have come so far to find.”

There is nothing common and unclean, my impatient grand-daughter; you ought to know better. ‘Patient as a Huguenot’ is a proverb, and all is fair to those who have the eyes to see it. As to the singing, I learned earlier than any of you to sing in a cage, and to what music!”

“I know, grand’mère. It was to the sound of threats and curses, and the volleys of the dragonnades. You were one of the children imprisoned and tormented in order to turn you from the faith, which you kept, good grand’mère, because ‘out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise.’”

“Ah! the babes and sucklings know little better what they are saying, and have no more merit of will and choice than the Innocents. When they have will and choice, how they falter and fall away, because the flesh is weak.”

“But, grand’mère, I do not know, and perhaps it is audacious to say it, but it seems to me the hot persecution which lasted but a moment, because no living creatures,

in their nature, could endure it longer, was not so much harder to bear than life—long exile and isolation among strangers and foreigners who hate us and slander us, grand'mère."

"They do not all hate us, little one, though their Defoe has written

'Two hundred thousand pairs of wooden shoes,  
Who, God be thank'd, had nothing left to lose ;'

and 'no longer 'strangers and foreigners,' was once written to men more hunted and despised than we or our fathers have been. 'All things are easy,' but troubles are best not talked of, at least they are talked of enough by your mother, who did not live near enough to the worst of them to feel that they could not really hurt—just as we shall feel death can not hurt us one day, though it has been our *bête noire* all our lives. Just so are troubles when we look back and count what they have cost without experiencing the blessing and the joy of the persecuted. In the same way you would grudge to be still paying by instalments the price of my wedding-gown, of which you never saw the beauty, and which was unpicked, and cut down, and made anew into a mantle for my son Hubert, forty years before you were born. But you have not the excuse of your mother, Yolande ; you never saw the sun of France, nor worshiped in a *Temple*, under a pastor of your own people—a sufferer like yourself among fellow-sufferers ; nor did you ever go a-marketing in the old *Place*, or pull great gourds, red and yellow like the sunset, or gather caper blossom, scented with vanille. You have nothing to complain of ; you are English-born, and can speak the English tongue like a native ; you are a true Englishwoman."

"Never, grand'mère, I would rather be—Catholic."

"Hush ! I shall tell you what you are—a French Jew. All the nationalities which think themselves better than the other nationalities are Jewish, and all the Churches which think themselves better than the other Churches are Jewish. But at the same time I beg the pardon of the poor Jews for the comparison. They had reason for their exclusiveness, while the French and the English, Roman Catholic or Reformed, have none, and even profess

to have none. For me, I love France; I do not say how I love France: I think of her every day, dream of her every night, till I am tempted to be an idolatress, and to imagine that Heaven will be like the native country. And, indeed, so it will be in one sense, Yolande, for it is the Father's house. The French know what that means to a marvel, though one has told me that it is used as a reproach against them, that they have no turn of phrase save 'with myself,' or 'my household,' for what the English call 'sweet home.' The French have the Father's house, at least. But as for me, I am charmed with England—it is so like Holland, and is so cool and fresh in this bit of meadow land. With the English rudeness and truth also, which reminds me of the prickly bosquets of roses I once reared in my garden, where M. Claude had walked. These English have had their own way ever since they killed their king, which was very wicked—indeed, quite profane. The French have done nothing of the kind, though the unhappy Charles, misled by his mother and his brother, and by Guise and Lorraine, fired from the Louvre on his people on that night of despair, when our Coligni, a very lion at bay, was slain; and our Henry of Navarre—Jeanne d'Albret's brave boy—was held a prisoner. The 'religion' in its professors has always regarded it as one of the most cruel and calumnious accusations brought against 'the faithful' that they were not loyal. It is only madmen and assassins, like Clement and Ravaillac, who would slay the Lord's anointed. But from that day to this the English have had their own way; and have they abused it? No. They have had a few thousands of bread-rioters, breakers of our French machinery, and burners of the houses of Catholics, it is true; but there will always be doubtful characters in every class and nation. The brave, patient people have been quiet and tolerant, just and merciful. The English have been masters in their parliaments and on their battle-fields, since the man of the people, Oliver—not the barber, Yolande, the brewer, and oh! such another brewer, a hero who spoke brave words, mighty words for the oppressed Vaudois, our brethren in Piedmont, and behold the honor! The English have kept their heads. They have not been gasconaders, or tyrants of the *canaille*, undoing themselves and others.

I believe that in their noble, savage way they have given God the glory. I esteem, I honor, I salute the English, not only for the shelter they afford us, poor driven dust of emigrants, but for the example they present of possessing their own big souls in patience."

"Well, grand'mère, I wish they returned the compliment. I can not see, for my part, that the admiration and the friendship should all be on one side."

"Ah! then you do not see the well-spring of Christian life which burst from the broken heart of the Divine Founder. But this monopoly you speak of, as one would of the salt-tax in France, is what I began our conversation by scolding about. I don't want to limit the love of one's neighbor to me and my house. Not at all. I want to have it everywhere, like the good air we breathe; but I must show my good-will in order to win a sight of another's good-will. I believe it is present even throughout the universe, north and south, east and west, among great multitudes of every kindred and tongue and nation, only it is hidden from us; and we traverse each the other's streets, and rub each the other's clothes, not knowing each other —bah!—but elbowing each other and knitting our brows at each other. Now, I desire that we should know each other better here at Sedge Pond. We came here before the buds were on the trees; at present they are in full leaf, and I have not yet made a friend of a living creature in the place, save the birds, the cats, and the dogs. I shall pass over the sheep, the oxen, and the horses, and go on at once to the poor, my children, at Toulouse, whom I have missed more than the green leaves, and the warbling, purring, barking voices of friends in London. No; London is not a modern Babylon, as your mother calls it, it is a great Christian city, full of violence and excess and selfish luxury, but also alive with brave battlings for truth and justice and noble wants, like our own Paris. It may be rolled in blood and bathed in fire, but it is no more Babylon than the Lord's Gospel is the law of Moses. Our Paris and this London can not perish and be given over to obscene beasts; because they are redeemed with a price—in Christ first, and then in all their righteous men, sublime martyrs, and returned prodigals, in every century, following afar off, after Him, in endless conqueror's procession.

The Christian cities will come out pure as the gold, glad as the light in their day. But the question with us just now is, not of great London, but of little Sedge Pond; and the little one is not to be despised, since it may need us the most. I shall set about learning to know the people, or rather, for I flatter myself I know them a little already, teaching the people to know me, Grand'mère Dupuy, of the Shottery Cottage, countrywoman and sister of good Vincent de Paul, though he acknowledge me not; and I command you to help me, Yolande."

The speaker was a little old woman, dressed in a Lyons silk gown, with the skirt drawn through the pocket holes. She wore a mob cap of fine lace, had mittens on her hands, and her neckerchief was fastened by a silver dove instead of a cross. She was at that moment resting on a staff, with a carved coral head, representing another little old woman in scarlet. Her rustling silk, her cobweb lace, her foreign accent, and her lovely old face might have clearly told the on-looker that she belonged to the latter part of the last century, and to that country which owns at once the loveliest and the ugliest old women. The accessories, too, suited the main figure. The room had an air of quiet, but was not without its ornaments. There was an elaborately decorated and festooned bed in one corner; a curtain hung before the door; a wood-fire was on the hearth; and there were on the walls a few foreign prints, mostly of gaunt, care-worn men, in Geneva gowns and skull-caps. Her companion was a tall, slender girl of sixteen, in as rustling a silk gown and as heavy a quilted petticoat as the old lady's. She had a little cap on her head, which surmounted a roll of black-brown hair. The girl's face was prematurely womanly, and delicately cut, bearing a resemblance to her relative's, though with less color, and more shaded and sharp than the old woman's could ever have been; but it was a sort of paraphrase of the old woman's beauty, sicklied over, hollowed, and worn betimes, by the fact of its having blossomed in the shade, carrying, before it was able to carry it, a burden of thought. The big eyes had taken a grave, far-withdrawn, unfathomable look, from their striving to read the enigma of a sinning, suffering world, without their owners having got the key of faith, or while the key, still but a wax

model, took, but did not retain, the shape of any obstacle to which it was applied, in place of combating and overcoming it.

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## CHAPTER II.

### GRAND'MERE DUPUY'S ATTEMPT TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE PEOPLE ABOUT HER.

GRAND'MERE DUPUY was a resolute, enthusiastic old woman, and was no cipher, but a ruling spirit, though it must be understood that she ruled with the old metaphorical ivory wand, draped in myrtle, in the house of her married, middle-aged emigrant son. Accordingly, that very afternoon, as she had said, she set about beginning her attack upon what she had found the locked and padlocked fortresses of Britons' hearts at Sedge Pond.

With innocent wile and womanly tact she said to Yolande—

“These honest villagers hunger, though they do not starve, as they did in poor France after its bloody wars and ghastlier splendors. Yes, these Sedge Pond folk want in the midst of plenty. They live, like the hogs, on sodden bread, raw meat, and vegetables. They have the dyspepsia or the spleen. See how purple and tallow-faced they are ; hear of their surfeits, their fevers, their wastes, their pinings. They really know nothing of their own word ‘comfort,’ save in connection with swilling and smoking in the ale-house. That is not even a resting-place for travelers, as with us—only a rendezvous for the natives. When we are merry, it is under the walnut and olive-trees, in the games. It may be giddiness and light-mindedness, as your mother says : but it is not riot. But when they are merry, it is in the ale-house—always the ale-house. Even when they have the fair, what is it but the whole streets filled, the stalls surrounded, the caravans visited by the customers of the ale-house ? The marriage-guests are borrowed from the ale-house ; their harvest-feasts are kept in the ale-house, or are versions of the ale-house feasts in granaries and barns. Fie ! I believe their magistrates sit, their choristers practice, their clerks, per-

haps even their ministers, relax themselves from their cock-fighting and their execution of highwaymen in the ale-house. In one word, comfort and amusement for the peasants of England mean—the ale-house. My child, the stomach has something to do with that ; the cooking, the housekeeping at least, may be improved. I don't say that we have not a great deal to learn ourselves, above all a marmot, a flower of the cabbage like you, Yolande ; but we will remember that wherever the French have settled the leprosy and the scurvy have disappeared. We will let the poor people taste our savory *pot-à-feu*, our cool *gouîter* of the sliced artichoke or the cucumber, our warm *ragoût* of the cutlets or the kidneys, our bland almond milk and our sweet succory water. I wager they never tasted any thing so nice, and will not care for the harsh heady yeast after it. They will turn their backs on the ale-house and its commodities. We will go to-day to Goody Gubbins ; she is an incurable, and has only the parish for her relations. I have seen the pastor's servants carrying her greasy messes and muddy slops, just a little better than the everlasting beans and bacon and hunches of bread and cheese of the ale-house. Who knows but, if the good God will bless the deed, we may work a Reformed miracle, and heal the sick?"

Madame Dupuy's intentions were excellent and kindly, though a little short-sighted and halting, as the most excellent intentions of fallible mortals are apt to be. But she did not let the grass grow beneath her ancient, tripping, high-heeled, silver-buckled feet in executing them. She had her own cooking apparatus and her own stores : ingenious though economical the one, and of an ample, skillful range the other. She was never without her simmering *pot-à-feu*, the materials for her summer or winter *gouîter*, or the glass in which her pebbles of sugar were dissolving and sinking in a thick, luscious syrup to the bottom of the clear spring water. She had her pipkins, her ewers, her trays—plain enough, for she had come from among a people who were so stanch that not more than a third of their number had succumbed in creed to a lengthened era of fines, penalties, imprisonments, and law-suits, which had converted their silver to copper, and their porcelain to earthenware. But all the utensils were dis-

tinguished by clever fitness for their end, by neatness of form and gayety of tone, and when the austerity into which the Huguenot Church has been driven did not forbid it, even by an elegant simplicity of design. Nor did it detract much from the elegant simplicity of Grand'mère Dupuy's accompaniments that in practice she wore silk and lace, or that in principle she was a Huguenot and *bourgeoise*. M. Dupuy had been and was still connected in trade with silk manufactures; and no one, with any pretensions to the position of a gentlewoman, dressed in other materials at that date. On close inspection it might have been seen that the silk had been very artistically scoured, and the lace very artistically darned. And on minor matters again, Madame Dupuy was more of a French woman, and still more of a human being, than any thing else.

After dinner Grand'mère Dupuy set out from the Shottery Cottage with Yolande, who carried the *pot-à-feu* in a pipkin moulded from a gourd, with a gourd leaf and stalk for the handle, and carried it very much as another girl would have carried a basket of roses, or a casket of jewels; but still sombrely, distrustfully, reluctantly, for all her air. Grand'mère walked slowly beside her with her coral-headed staff, eagerly recounting, as she went, how she had always taken it with her when she went to visit her sick at Toulouse, until the peasants hailed it, made much of it, named it the little red madame, Madame Rougeole.

The village of Sedge Pond at any period in the eighteenth century was by no means a model village. It was situated between London and Norwich. All was misty, flat, and monotonous about it; but there was the perfection of verdure in marsh and meadow, broken only by patches of yellow-bearded corn and red-flowered clover. There was a sleepy, lulling motion in the slow river, with its clumsy barges, and there was breadth in the blue distance. The roads, both high-road and by-road, were heavily rutted in their yellow soil; the lowlands were liable to be flooded at particular seasons by the sluggish, stagnant brown water. There were rough, bristling, purple and olive-colored bits of "wääste" to take in everywhere. There was a castle—a mass of pretentious white masonry, which had replaced a more picturesque, weather-stained, crumbling tower, partly seen among the woods which rose

above the Dupuys' cottage ; and there was a rectory like a château itself, steep-roofed, gabled, and pinnacled, and with pleasure-grounds, and a wilderness. This latter had the advantage of a constant tenant and a numerous, flourishing household. There was not another good house in the village, saving Shottery Cottage, which was a remote appendage of the castle, and the ale-house, which was a place of public entertainment, and not of private convenience. The other houses stood in irregular rows and groups, and were dropsical, bulged-out, discolored cottages, covered with thatch, and in every stage of rottenness. For that matter they were much indebted to the house-leek, and here and there to a side growth of ivy, for holding them together ; for nature was trying hard to embroider them over with some of her own leaf and flower-work—wonderfully good embroidery, which makes men forget the ruin in rapture at the tracery over it. There were no spouts above, nor gutters below the cottages, nothing to protect them from the prevailing wet except narrow stone ledges, like eyelids without eyelashes, placed above the never-opened windows, filled with small, thick, diamond-shaped panes of glass, where they were not broken and boarded up, or stuffed with straw, grass, wool, or any thing which had at the moment come to hand. Beyond these ledges the moisture dripped, soaked, gathered, and grew green-coated. The common was a puddle, the wells were one or two open draw-wells, and before each door there was a heap of fermenting, festering refuse. Any gardens belonging to the cottages were like the villagers in this respect, that their good qualities were out of sight. They lay in diminutive shaggy plots of potatoes, turnips, herbs, with occasionally a straggling, neglected, and misused flower, hidden behind the houses. Indeed, had it not been for the quiet, home-like landscape, with its corn-fields in their cool fresh green, ripening and whitening in strips and nooks among the pasture, and the castle park thrusting forward and separating the more rural scene with a woodland bluff or shoulder, dark with tufts of chestnuts, oaks, and plane-trees, the village of Sedge Pond would have been as uncoinely a village as ever housed refugees, and bred and fostered small-pox, purple fever, and ague.

The church was half a mile distant from the village, which was thus out of the comfortable sight of its spire, and of every thing but the faint sound of its hoarse bell, although it was easily reached, down a short lane communicating by a private gate, about midway up the castle avenue. The little church-yard, in one visitation of the plague, had become full to the brim, and the oppressed earth—crammed not by means of coffins, but by trenches—had been forced up breast high with the wall, and was left behind, to add its quota to the other disease-distilling influences of Sedge Pond.

In some eyes the ale-house atoned for all defects and drawbacks. It was a low, wide, octagonal building, of mellow red brick, with stone coping, and containing several large, low-browed, brown rooms, with long tables, wattled seats and benches, and in which there were fires at every season, smouldering like carbuncles, or roaring and blazing like furnaces. These were the chosen retreats from the skittle-ground, the bowling-green, and the court where the mains between the game-cocks were fought on each side of the whitewashed porch. All the revelry and debauchery of the neighborhood went on there; and revelry and debauchery were so much the gross habit of the day, that the place set apart for them was not viewed with any suspicion, but was actually invested with an influence and respectability which absolved it from the necessity of becoming the “Castle Arms,” or seeking such patronage as any tavern, inn, or hostelry in the kingdom would now do. If one takes into account, in addition, the white foam of tankards, the light curling blue vapor of pipes, the cribbage-boards, the soiled news-letters for those who desired other stimulants and more intellectual influences, together with the social intercourse, and occasionally the larger gatherings of a more festive character, where there was a mixture of sexes, it is possible to understand how to the hob-nailed, red-cloaked peasants of Sedge Pond, comfort and amusement meant the ale-house. What Grand’mère Du-puy had therefore to contend with, when she proposed to supersede their staple good, with its black shadow of brutality and crime, was something which would sorely task her light, subtle French substitutes, unless she supplemented them by something infinitely better.

Goody Gubbins's cottage was the worst in its row. There, on straw and rags, with chronic damp chilling her rheumatic, palsied limbs, and without day-light to cheer her, her life was barely kept in by the Church's dole, although otherwise she lay quite uncared for and unsolaced, her body begrimed and engrained with dirt, and her grizzled hair matted beneath her filthy linen curch—a wreck of humanity.

But Grand'mère Dupuy, of the Church under the Cross, recognized humanity under any aspect, and had no quarrel with it. There was nothing in her but self-reproachfulness and self-forgetfulness, struggling for mastery, and, overpowering both, a mother's and a sister's tenderness. It was Yolande who revolted and shrank from the disfigured, disguised old woman, for the keen French analysis, which records "how severe are the young," reads in various ways.

"Good-day, my friend," began Grand'mère. "I am afraid you are very ailing, but you will improve, and all your ills will vanish by and by; if not here, hereafter," proceeded she, in her liquid, persuasive foreign accent, as she nodded now and then emphatically. "We have taken the liberty, and given ourselves the pleasure of bringing you some soup," continued Grand'mère, coming to the gist of her discourse, and gathering up her hooped skirt cleverly as she advanced lightly (that is, lightly for her fourscore years) to the side of the bed or lair, the better to aid her pet of an old woman to receive her refreshment.

Goody had been dozing when the Dupuys invaded her hovel, and in the dim light and the gathering mists of age, ignorance, stupidity, and suffering, she might well have looked scared as well as mazed when she was aroused to the unwonted and unaccountable apparition. "Who be you?" she gasped, clutching her torn coverlet, and staring at her visitors in blind hostility as well as blank wonder. "A dunna know you—you be seeking summat of a poor lorn body. A's nought to give or to tell. How should a?" she moaned out, her moaning mixed with a loud whimper of protest.

The reception was not encouraging, but Grand'mère was patient.

"We are two of the French family at Shottery Cottage,

women like yourself, my good dame, and we have heard of your infirmities. Ah, dear Lord!—that they have been sorely neglected so long. We have come to succor you and ease them; no to serve ourselves, save by serving you."

Goody Gubbins had not heard of very many things, but she had heard of the French, to fight against whom stout village lads of her acquaintance had enlisted as soldiers under Wolfe or Cornwallis, and marched from their villages, not one in ten of them ever to see their native land again. Naturally she looked on the French as her mortal enemies, and when she heard that the two women were members of the French family who had penetrated into the village, through the recklessness of the lords of the castle, to get round her and entrap her, bedridden and pauper as she was, she set up a screech of utmost dismay and virulent opposition.

"Noa, noa! Pearson! Neebour Clay!—help!—help! A'm flayed! a'm murdered! though a never flapped, or clemmed, or so much as set eye on French maid or man before a took to my bed—not when a were the strapping-est wife and wench in the parish. Alack-a-day!"

"You deceive yourself, you are in error; rest quiet. Try the soup, my dear." And Grand'mère, in the difficulty, popped the uncovered pipkin right below Goody's nose.

Goody Gubbins had not been called "my dear" since the day when her good man was lying in intermittent fever, induced by draughts of the over-ripe October of which he died, thus paying the penalty of his eight-and-forty hours' sojourn at the ale-house, drinking the health of the German George, who had come to be king in the room of good Queen Anne. She did not take well with the epithet; it made her grue just as when Giles Gubbins was first "soft" with her, to get her harvest wages out of her pocket, and the lawful means failing, then beat her black and blue, and obtained his end unlawfully, save that it was in his character of a husband. But the smell of this rich *omnium gatherum*, which had boiled and bubbled till it had refined itself of every thing but the very core of good things, was more fragrant than the gales of Araby the Blest to the stunted, blunted nostrils. She sniffed and coughed, and sniffed again, and her patriotism and prejudices wavered.

"There bean't snails in it?" she inquired, tremulously, her toothless chops watering, her bleared eyes blinking greedily.

"Not one. It is the very best of soups, my good woman; the true soup for an invalid, while you have been swallowing—ouf!—hard roots, dry seeds of grain, grease and water."

"The broth and the bit of flesh is none so bad as you make it, be yourn what it like.". Goody began to speak up for her food, offended, like her betters, that her right of grumbling should be appropriated by a stranger and foreigner. "If Pearson's Sam and Sally weren't so long on the way, and didn't go to spill it at the stile, and have their share of it off their long fingers. There bean't toads in it?" pausing with revived jealousy, after she had ventured to taste and dwell on a mouthful.

"No, no; faith of Geneviève Dupuy. But why do you object to the poor, soft, fat, white fellows of snails, when you do not refuse to eat the raw bleeding flesh. The mourgettes are very good for the sick," remonstrated Madame, with rash innocence; "for the frogs, I can tell you they are not so easy to get here," she reflected, pensively.

"Lawks! there would be if she could get 'em!" declared the old woman, stiffening like stone and dropping the spoon. "Noa, noa, it's pisen, it's witches' broo; the corns of barley and the peas ne'er grit agin my single tooth; a did not taste ingens; it's like nought on earth but balm wine and the smell of the dogs' messes up at the castle. Get ye gone! a wunna swallow another drop of the broo, a've telled 'ee, a'll swound, a'll be throttled first!" cried Goody, in a renewed paroxysm of terror and rage, and thrust her rags into her mouth with all the force which remained to her claw-like hands.

So there was nothing for it but for Grand'mère to retreat before the misled maddened object of her charity should fulfill her threat.

"You see, Grand'mère," observed Yolande significantly.

"She does not know what is good for her, the poor suspicious, straitened heart. Yolande, you would not be so mean and foolish as to resent what a poor miserable creature imagines to her injury," Grand'mère said, more re-

proachfully than usual—indeed, almost with severity—to her grand-daughter. Then she turned and began to blame herself sharply, which was much more in her way, and a safer course for reformers. “We are punished because we have begun at the wrong end. We ought to have addressed ourselves to the little ones, and made friends of them first. Look, they run wild, or they are toilers from their cradles, poor broken-backed, gloomy-looking gamins and cocottes, and they grow up totally without knowledge. I do not believe there are six men and women among the peasants of Sedge Pond can read and write. The school of the pastor is for the sons and daughters of the farmers who can pay, the little boys and girls in little coats and collars, aprons and hoods—the country *bourgeoisie*, in fact. The pastor himself does not encourage the little peasants to come to the school; he says it teaches them conceit and disrespect to their superiors. I heard him say so in a sermon on useless acquirements and false pretenses, at the church. But what teaching must that have been! Even the Jesuit fathers and the convent sisters would have taught better than that. My child, we will have a little class. Betty Sykes, Teddy Jones, Pierce and Bab Frew (I pick up the names as quickly as a magpie) will come, and you will instruct them in English reading, and I shall manage the writing and the figures, and we will make them wise—not foolish, and modest—not insolent. We will not tire of it, Butterfly, because it may not be so charming the second day as the first. We will work and weary, and work again, with the stolid little souls, because it will be our sowing for the world’s harvest; and I tell you, Yolande, we will have fêtes and recompenses if your mother does not forbid them as vain and worldly.”

Yolande was not sanguine. Indeed there was no sanguineness in the girl. All high hope was the portion of the old woman, who had fathomed adversity and knew how little it could hurt of itself, if men and women were truly armed against it. But Yolande was docile, and followed where Grand’mère led the way. So, with the Lyons silk tucked up, and the coral-headed staff, and with the companion silk without staff, the two went picking their way among the pools and the dirt-heaps, from door to door of the village, heavy with dense dullness, or only

quickened here and there into rabid intolerance. They found every double-leafed, cut-across door literally and figuratively shut in their faces, and fared but poorly in their canvass for the school. One woman wanted her youngsters to watch the geese, feed the pig, break wood, draw water, as she had done in her own young days, and she thought they could not do better, or hope to master any thing which would come more pat to their hands in after-life. The woman had right on her side. Madame assured her heartily these were very good things, admirable things, which were referred to as virtues and excellencies in the book of Proverbs; but were they enough for gaining the victory over sin, for enlightening the understanding and disciplining the heart? Say, then, were they enough for that other life in the skies?

"Anan," answered Grand'mère's opponent. "She left all that to Pearson; that were his business, and weren't he paid for doing it? Poor bodies had enough to do to live, and fit their children to live, in these hard times."

Another speaker, a gruff man, who had been for years employed in the next manufacturing town, told Grand'mère that they wanted no creeping spies, nor crafty seducers, nor paid agents of the foreign cloth and silk weavers, no gunpowder and glass makers, who now swarmed in the land and preyed on it, and snatched the bite out of the mouths of honest English artisans by their devil's work of accursed machinery, replacing men's hands and brains.

"Not brains, my master," argued Madame mildly, "when the machinery is the creature and the tool of man's brains."

But the master had already retired into the farther end of his cottage, growling ominously of the horse-pond for man or woman who molested him with treacherous tricks of kindness.

A third hearer put her fingers in her ears.

"I was brought up in the south lands. I've seen the towers and halls where the good bishops stood and choked in the smoke rather than bring in the Pope to sit in scarlet, put his foot on our necks, and wade in our blood again. Good-mother's grandfeyther was a Puritan in the wars—could pray like a saint, as well as strike and stab like a man. She had his rusty blunderbuss, which was as good

as a cast horse-shoe for luck, above her chumley. I be not your bargain, madam."

Here was an opening at last, which Grand'mère was quick to perceive, and radiant in seeking to profit by.

"My good woman, we do not love the Pope of Rome and the mass any more than you. We are Huguenots, who have abandoned our houses, our temples, our native country, for the truth. We have suffered like you. We have bought your protection, confidence, and friendship, by our sorrows and sufferings."

"I dunna know that we suffered," observed the descendant of the Fifth Monarchy-men, ungraciously and doggedly. "Good-mother always says her grandfeyther won his battles, as the truth is bound to win. And as to buying, I'll maintain you've bought nought from me, neither good nor bad. I'd traffic with none of your breed, whether Huggenies mean the brazen pack-men with rings in their ears, under theircurls, and French linen and brandy beneath the Irish linen and anise-seed water in their packs, and who bowed their knees, crooked their fingers, and kissed the broken cross at the Horse Troughs, where the four roads meet, before they were shot by the red-coats."

"Alas, my poor Jacques! The good God grant you saw beyond the symbol," murmured Grand'mère, the moisture dimming those clear, tender grey eyes of hers.

The speaker went on, rudely citing her unflattering examples—

"Or the idle, dissolute dogs, players on the French horns, whom my lady brought down with her the last time to the castle, who jabbered their monkey-prayers to the pictures in the picture-gallery."

The woman was so irritated and alarmed, that she herself pronounced a spell to protect her from the offenders—a spell long current in Protestant England, and occasionally lugged out of dark, superstitious lurking-holes to this day—

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on."

This she sputtered, rather savagely than solemnly, in the tingling, perplexed ears of Grand'mère Dupuy, whose fathers had renounced prayers to the saints before the battle of Pavia.

Grand'mère was hard to be foiled, and was only braced to another essay by these outbursts. She had the exhaustless application, industry, and good humor of her nation, and the devoted principles of her sect.

"We will try neither the old nor the young this time, my pigeon, but a girl like you—the girl Deborah Pott—whom I have caught staring in at our door and windows when she passes, and who once ran after me and restored my sack when I dropped it, nearly knocking me down as she did so. She is not pretty—she is an ugly, ungainly creature; but I think she has what is better than beauty, and only second to grace and goodness—wit, mother-wit they call it in England. But this lost child has no mother, only a step-mother, who gives her the kindness of the law—no more. Oh! well, it is good that she gives her that. She can not make a mother's heart for a child who is not hers, and she may be so unfortunate as to forget to pray for it. Our Priscille tells me Mother Pott is a poor widow with a large family to rear, and no wonder she is sharp in the tongue as steel or vinegar. Yet she shelters and feeds this Deborah with what help she can get from the girl's work in the fields, and without much hope of giving her away in marriage. However, Deborah has a wise woman's name, and if she has wit, we will give her a dowry—not that we have money—'silver and gold have we none,' my little Yolande, save what my son can spare to Philippine to keep the house and furnish the linen-presses and the wardrobes afresh; but we have our gifts and our accomplishments, though the country people here think so little of them. Deborah, with the wise woman's name, will be a doctoress. We will teach her our skill in the herbs, which our family have had since Bernarde Romilly stanched the wounds of the great Conde: that will be one dowry for her; and the cambric-darning, the lace-mending, the working of clocks into hose, will be another. She may not get a husband, for I have my suspicions that the English lads are not wise in their own interests; but it does not signify, my Deborah will be a mother in Sedge Pond, and she will nurse the generations of the future."

At first it seemed that Grand'mère Dupuy had finally hit the mark. Great uncouth Deborah Pott had not been so used to preferment that she should scout this; she had

faced too many real evils in the bare cold lodging, which was hardly a home, to recoil from the strange French-woman as the rest of the villagers did. Moreover, Deborah Pott was of an inquisitive, dauntless turn of mind, which disposed her to venture on the opening of any oyster which the world might present to her.

“ My service, marm : I’d like to come and try, if mother’ud hear of it. She’s wicious, mother is, when she’s axed aught, because, as she says, she’s worritted enough without that plague into the bargain ; but she comes round most times after she’s been wild a bit, and she allers said she’d be main set up to be well rid of me.”

This speech was delivered with many a bob of an original, irregular courtesy by the fluttered, important Deborah, whom Grand’mère and Yolande had waylaid as she was returning from her field-work, with her long step, and short petticoat and shorter gown stained with clay, and her steeple-crowned hat, hardly browner than her brick-brown face, and her hoe over her shoulder.

But the bright prospect of success was soon dashed when Deborah came running over to Shottery Cottage, bellowing all the way like a lubberly boy.

“ Here I be to tell you—I be never to come nigh hand you, or to speak to you again. Mother swears I be the pest of her life, and a tomboy of a lass that will stick to her like a burdock ; but she’ll claw me and whack me till there’s never a rag of skin on my bones or a whole bone in my body, and she’ll have the mischief shook out of me (and I be right sure it never comed there till you put it in, mistress) ; she’ll never fee me to a wanton, play-acting, crazy old French queen, as would have her base job out of me, and mix me up in her vile plots, and leave me to hang by the neck at Tyburn till I were ‘ dead, dead, dead,’ like Punch’s Judy, when she were done with me. Lawk-a-daisy ! lawk-a-daisy !”

Now Grand’mère knew the sum of the accusation against her, and for a moment felt cut to the heart. That she—a clever, provident, diligent woman in her day, proud of her housekeeping, and her various arts in keeping accounts, dispensing advice and assistance, rearing and training children, handmaids, and even apprentices and clerks, as she had done in the old velouterie, with which the Du-

puys had been connected for generations, should be regarded as an unpractical, hare-brained enthusiast, was most mortifying. That she, the humblest, most grateful woman in the world, should be branded as an interloper and a supplanter of other workers, a filcher of their gains, made her sigh deeply,—but that she, a Huguenot, traditionally descended from the Albigenses, with their *Champ de Sang* and *Mas Calvi*, educated in the most uncompromising antagonism to the Roman hierarchy and the Roman Catholic creed—that she, an exile for her faith, should be accused of vile purposes and plots, brought tears to her grey eyes.

To be thus confounded with her persecutors and foes, in spite of her loud protest, to be ranked with them in their glaring errors by those who were very nearly as groveling, degraded, and pagan as the lowest of the Catholics they condemned, was a bitter drop in poor Grand'mère's cup. That she, an aged widow woman, living in strict seclusion under her son's roof, and the adherent of a Reformer whose followers, in their reaction from license, profligacy, and infidelity, were staid even to moroseness, and rigid to austerity, should be picked out and pointed at as a light, cruel kidnapper and destroyer of young girls, was almost too much for her kindly nature. But still she was able to bear the grievous misconstruction without malice; which was needful, for Yolande burst out in a girl's vehement spite and scorn.

"But why do they abuse and slander us?" she urged, bitterly.

"But why?" echoed Grand'mère, meekly. "I know not, unless they have forgotten, or never heard, how they admired and applauded our first service in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, and only recognize us to taunt and deride us as we come out of the French chapel in Hog Lane, at the Seven Dials."

In the singleness of heart, which is akin to second sight, Grand'mère did more than forbear; she arrived at a partial comprehension of the cause of her failure. Her poor—her children as she had called them—had been too much children to her, as they are prone to be in those sloth and languor-inspiring southern provinces so long subjected to the yoke. Saxon vigor could never stoop to such fostering and to such helplessness; it were to strike at its root and

branch to attempt this. Reformation, to be effectual, must work from within, not from without. The English, reformed by mandates of king and counsel, were not yet quite sensible of what true reformation was; while as to the French reformers, every one of them had had to go for himself into the desert, and had thus become noble, independent, and manly in his writhing agonies—protesting and steadfast in every nerve and maimed limb. And now the time was come for the two to meet and teach each other.

Grand'mère had been hasty, puffed up, and rash; she told herself all that, and it was true in a degree; but Grand'mère's faults were better than her neighbor's virtues, just as the doubts of Nicodemus and Martin Luther were better than the faith of other doctors of the Sanhedrim, and other monks.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE DUPUY HOUSEHOLD.

THE Dupuy household consisted of Monsieur and Madame Dupuy; Yolande, their only child; Grand'mère, Monsieur's mother; and Priscilla, or Priscille, or Prie, as the French tongues variously named a club-footed, taciturn, elderly English maid-servant attached to their service. The family was from Languedoc, which had been the very heart of the great heretical movement from the days of Richard of the Lion Heart. The people of that province have some of the liveliness of their Gascon neighbors, but it is crossed by Italian moodiness and passion.

The Dupuys had emigrated to England among the crowds from Languedoc, Angoumois, Brittany, Picardy, Alsace, Champagne, Auvergne, and Provence, where some of the hereditary nobility still bore on their shields the emblematic torches and stars of the Albigenses. They had been forced to escape with their lives owing to the long-continued consequences of there vocation of the Edict of Nantes. They suffered under political disabilities; their church services, and even their marriages, were illegal.

Their pains and penalties were innumerable, and scorn and contumely had been heaped upon them down even to the days of Jean Jacques, and the gushing, fermenting religion of nature.

So far as the Dupuys were concerned, the exodus had taken place twenty years ago, three or four years before Yolande was born. Silk manufacturers by hereditary trade, they had at first settled in the colony of Spitalfields. As years wore on, however, M. Dupuy, by his business qualifications, and notwithstanding difficulties, had attained a certain amount of prosperity and means; and as Madame's health showed symptoms of failing, he withdrew from greater interest in business than what was implied in his braving the dangers of the road, and the gentlemen of the road, in periodical coach journeys—quarterly, or more frequently, as necessity demanded—between London and Norwich. The family settled in the quiet village of Sedge Pond, which presented at first sight to tired, battered wayfarers like them as secure a place of rest and shelter as deceitful appearances could offer.

There the Dupuys had dwelt from spring to summer in complete isolation and seclusion, the sole interlude and incident in their lives being Monsieur's departures and returns, and the exciting risks by flood and field, from storms, overturns, and horse-pistols of which His Majesty's highway then presented a bountiful supply. But Grand'mère was kept active by other impulses; for notwithstanding all her experience, she was unable to regard Christianity—even Reformed Christianity, with its half-healed wounds and rankling wrongs—as a religion requiring one to retire, like an Englishman, into one's castle, raising the drawbridge and letting fall the portcullis. She did not understand that to live in peace with all men was only to be attained by living apart from all men—"neither making nor meddling in their concerns." Therefore Grand'mère instinctively tried the innocent wiles of her own pleasant land; and from her sacred, sunny, hoary height of four-score years she looked down full of hope, and was piteous only when the wiles failed.

The Dupuys, not merely exiles, but withdrawn even from their fellow-exiles, were thus thrown in upon themselves with the force of their national, sectarian peculiarities left

intact ; but they preserved their individual distinctions so well that they bore no great family likeness. The crisis, it is true, had worked powerfully on all the materials, but the materials were widely and permanently affected by sex, age, and personal history. The result was that they presented such warp and woof of good and evil as French Huguenots, English Puritans, and Scotch Covenanters supply each in turn to the dispassionate and candid observer. Monsieur was a Huguenot in name and politics, just as Praise-God Barebones was a Puritan or Erskine of Grange a Calvinist ; he was on that account the more tenacious in retaining the little he had left to make up for the much he had lost. He was a zealous, energetic, influential member of that foreign society which has only within late years been broadly recognized as a moving-spring and leaven in English annals, and justly recorded as such. But even in those days it found some manly, generous defenders, and certain acts and clauses of acts were wisely and liberally passed in the British Parliament for its protection. But the defense was so ineffectual, and so weakly were the protective clauses put in force, that false prophets and revolutionists were taken as the exponents and representatives of the refugees, and to pay them back in fit coin they were caricatured and villified even by William Hogarth, who was gentle to the Methodists. But there were more substantial outrages, too. Silk-mills, like that of Derby, were set on fire, and the sluices of great Yorkshire were undermined. It was an ordinary occurrence for foreign workmen to be felled with bludgeons ; and households such as the Dupuys, were like small colonies of ants in an empire of hornets.

Such a society had to fight hard for its existence, and had to be united by all ties whether kindred or selfish. The men who formed and cemented it, were certainly men of tact and vigor ; and they have left proof of this in the great French names which figure in England's story in the succeeding generations.

But Monsieur Dupuy suffered the blight which the faith of many men, especially Frenchmen, who are far more speculative than emotional, suffers on the dissipation of early illusions and prejudices. Coming out of a concentrated, narrowing atmosphere, where the views of life were

exaggerated and spasmodic, and having his eyes opened to the falseness of many of the lights seen through the highly colored, distorted medium, and to the retaliating aggression and intolerance of some of the most cherished dogmas, he gave way to the reactionary feeling which has been ever only too plentiful among such a society. Monsieur was a good Huguenot in so far as he remained stanchly, consistently mindful of his own wrongs as a Frenchman, and was sternly opposed to the Roman Catholic Church. But he went no farther than this, and was in every other sense unmistakably, undisguisedly, a man of the world. Madame, his wife, who thought differently, never ceased, openly and pointedly, to bemoan his declension, and to sit in judgment on it with mingled gloom and asperity; and though he was too much of a *bourgeois* gentleman and French husband to snap his fingers, he certainly did shrug his shoulders at her. Grand'mère, with her great, sweet charity, made allowance for his difficulties, temptations, and dangers, and bore with him, believed in him, and hoped in him. And the best thing in Monsieur was his conduct to his mother. He was a provoking, jibing husband, an indifferent, careless father, but he was Grand'mère's stay and support in all duty and honor; nay, he was more; the sallow, periwigged man of fifty was as deferential and as tender in his tone to the grandmother of the family as when she was the house-mistress, and he a chubby boy at her apron-string.

Madame Dupuy could not be called an unhappy woman, for she was one of those who luxuriate in their woes; but hers was not a nature calculated to make others happy. She was a woman of the closet, with the faults of the closet opposed to the sins of the world. She was sincere, constant, virtuous, and pious in her own way, but then that was quite a French way. She was more respectful and submissive to her mother-in-law as a daughter than she was to her husband as a wife; while as a mother herself she exacted unqualified obedience, and was careful and anxious, but not fond. She had been upward of twenty years in England, which had served her so far as a haven of refuge and an adopted country, but she had not discovered a single merit in it! She had been six months at Sedge Pond without crossing her door-step, except to at-

tend the English church-service, the only service within her reach—the Lutheran form of which she not only deeply lamented over, but bitterly resented. She took no interest in any thing in the wide world beyond her own family, her fellow-exiles, her church, and her country—the latter of which she had left to lying prophets and the destroyer. She discoursed continually on one or other of these subjects, dwelling particularly on the trials and persecutions of Huguenot history, until they seemed to shadow with a black pall all that grew and flourished, smiled and rejoiced, on the face of the earth, and until her talk was like a passionate protest against the government of the great God and Father of all, whom she feared, and only feared. When she spoke of her church and her country, she did not dwell as Grand'mère did on fruits ripened under the sharp frost of pain and anguish. She did not dilate with delight on gallant endurance, on love stronger than death, on patience, charity, purity, or heavenly-mindedness; she never credited or reported the remorse and ruth, the pity, the kindness, the generous pleading, in the formidable face of hostile despotism, of those who, like the Prince of Shechem, were more noble than all the house of their fathers. It was not of the Christian chivalry of Agrippa d'Aubigné in many a siege and battle-field, nor of the Christian loyalty of Madame de la Force, that she waxed eloquent. Not of the noble, half-mad prophetess, Marie Villiers; not of the common ground on which a Bossuet might meet a Claude, or a Fénelon in his archiepiscopal chair a Paul Rabaud in the desert, did she speak. It was of men hung by the thumbs till the blood spurted from underneath their nails, of women frightened into fits by hideous spectacles, of drums beaten night and day to deprive the wretched of the last human resource—the oblivion of sleep; it was of desecrated temples and their dismal desolation, of the galleys, the hurdle, and the hangman, that she incessantly clamored.

No wonder then that Yolande Dupuy, with her mental appetite fed on such a diet, should grow up sad, sombre, and scornful, with a perplexed, scared look in the midst of her youth and beauty. Had she been a lad, a young Hannibal, she might have been tempted to swear some deadly heathen oath that she would live to be avenged on the

foes whom Christ tells us to forgive as we hope to be forgiven. Without Grand'mère, there is no saying how un-girl-like Yolande might have been. She would certainly have been more absorbed in the centuries-long injuries of her sect and race; more chilled by the dank, cold atmosphere of prisons and tombs; more unsusceptible to those sweet, balmy influences and bountiful consolations of God in nature and humanity, which call upon all men, however tried and however down-trodden, not simply to stifle their sobs and hide their wounds with the heroism of the ancient Stoic, but to take heart, look up and resume their march, in the confidence of free-born sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, as knowing that their redemption draweth nigh. For Yolande had no relief derived from the robust, cheery presence of such a privileged, hearty, confidential family servant as a French Fifine or Solaire might have been. Priscille, though she had taken Yolande as a new-born child into her arms, and was inseparably identified and bound up with the family, was yet by temper, infirmity, and circumstance, graver, more reserved and taciturn, than any austere Huguenot born and bred. She was a gruff woman with a temper, whose humor was so dry that, like old wine, it required an old and disciplined palate to appreciate it; and indeed, it was true that old Grand'mère would nod and shake her neat, trim old sides at Priscille's brevity and unpremeditated strokes of sarcasm.

Grand'mère was the sole sunbeam in the family. She was a living disproof of any notion which might have existed that it was tribulation in itself which had rendered the family so still and severe. She had suffered more tribulation than any of them—than all of them put together—for she had lived nearer the darkest, most cruel days of blood and fire. Grand'mère had seen Huguenots, whose only crime had been attending a religious meeting of their own persuasion, walking behind a troop of infantry, collars of iron around their necks, and heavy chains linking them four to four and six to six, and yet daring to bare their brave heads, and sing one of Clement Marot's psalms—

“ Jamais ne cesserai  
De magnifier le Seigneur.”

Ay, her own elder brother, Blaise, had been one of the men who with cramped limbs, swollen by the weight of their fetters and the damp straw on which they had lain the previous night, dragged themselves along, singing triumphantly as they went on their way to wanton insult, wasting sickness, and an early deliverance by death. And not only this—Grand'mère's husband not being a reformed pastor, who was allowed the favor of taking on himself without molestation the execution of his sentence of perpetual banishment—had been caught in the act of escaping from the country which condemned and abhorred him, and had to work as a slave, fastened to a bench, under the almost tropical sun of Marseilles, where he had been flogged and bastinadoed for three endless years. On obtaining his release, through a singular act of clemency, he returned to his home a bloodless skeleton, a harmless, light-brained, mazed man, paralyzed not in body, but in heart.

Yet Grand'mère could laugh and sing now. It was not from French levity, but because, in her day, she could "cry with the best." These tremendous crosses and tortures had not been without their blessed light and their balm—not without their crushed fragrance of meekness, their lofty consciousness of rectitude, their solemn tender consolation of walking in the very footsteps of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and even of the great Master himself; else whence the force of the "Blessed are ye when all men shall revile you and persecute you?" But it is not so much in the actual endurance as in the after-thought of great tribulation that flesh and blood cry out, nature revolts, and all the smaller, meaner passions come out to coil and spring like a brood of snakes on their prey. To Grand'mère these old sorrows were far away on the dim and distant horizon, divided from her by more than one life-time. Grand'mère was on those hills of Beulah near to the land where there is nothing to hurt or destroy in all God's holy mountain.

Thus the Huguenot household abode in the grey solid little Shottery Cottage with its square casements and hood-like porch. They were distinct and peculiar as any Jewish household, while the old village of Sedge Pond lay couchant in the attitude and temper of a sluttish, drowsy mastiff. Passers-by could see through the cottage case-

ments, ajar or wide open in summer, into the house; and through the glass-door or the wicket into the garden, which occupied a corner of the castle-park, with its terraces, its pleached arbor, and its grotesque monster or two in box or yew. But what most attracted the eye of the villagers was the pond, which they declared was kept for and stored with frogs, or the rapid growth of strange herbs and vegetables—chicory, endive, brilliant scarlet beans, which were regarded as being equally uncanny and unfamiliar. And then, too, figures were often to be seen moving among the flowers or seated in the rooms. Eyes were perhaps apathetic in peering at first, but there was no want of strength of disparagement in the owners when once they looked, and stared at Monsieur, more flabby than lean-fleshed, and not very remarkable in his rusty brown suit, plain cravat, knee-breeches, and square shoes with square buckles. Yet though he was more conformable in gait and garment to English fashions than his womenkind, he would seem odd enough to these stupid eyes as he led Grand'mère by the tips of the fingers to her seat at table, or from the pleached arbor to her room. Well was it that these villagers saw not all his graces of deportment, for he would stand many minutes at the back of her chair as courtly and insinuating as if he had been a prince and she a princess, he a young lover and she his mistress. Then the rest of the family made up a curious picture. Madame Dupuy, in the perpetual mourning which the later Huguenot women assumed, sat precise and cheerless, with more wrinkles and furrows in her narrow forehead than contracted Grand'mère's broad fair one, and her grizzled hair as if in mourning, too, like the rest of her attire; while Yolande, in dress, was a fac-simile of her grandmother, although the two models were so very different—the one so old, small, fair, sweet, and bright, the other so young, tall, and grey-toned in contradiction to the firmer, fuller outlines. There was indeed a flavor of tartness about the picture, and a permanent Rembrandtish gloom which was not without its mystery and its charm.

The public rooms of the cottage were not divided into better and worse parlors, as in other English cottages and middle class or small gentry's houses of the time, but into the man's room and the women's room. The man's room

was half study, half business room, crowded and cumbered with heavy chests and boxes. A black cabinet, with numerous shallow drawers and doors quaintly carved with scenes from the life of King Solomon, stood in one corner, and escritoires, suggesting a lingering grasp of trade, and hinting of reverential preservation of family and party records and reliques, in the other. The only visitors who had yet appeared at Sedge Pond were received by Monsieur before they were met and entertained by the general family, and that with a hospitality staid and subdued, but striking in its ungrudgingness, for it was the only outlay which the strangers, economical to penuriousness in English eyes, did not grudge and stint themselves in. The visitors were emigrants like themselves, more or less fresh from France, or worn into foreign grooves. There were agents of emigrants too, and with them occasionally came Englishmen, so allied to them in business as to have got over the salient points on which they and the emigrants stood aloof from each other. Sometimes, also, there would be a sprinkling of other foreigners—sputtering Swiss, bland Italians, and phlegmatic Dutch, as they passed to and from Norwich and London, in the interests of the newly-established or renovated silk manufactures which were carried on in small, dingy, and most inconvenient manufactories, where the looms, still waiting for Jacquard, were so complicated and so little adapted to the human shape and movements that the *canuts* of Lyons, who had worked at them for generations, were notoriously a crippled, dwarfed, and diseased class. After all, it was an odd shaping of circumstances which made a remote, thoroughly insular village, not even on any of the great roads, become a chosen meeting-place and rendezvous of those who, to nine-tenths of even enlightened Englishmen, figured, not without reason, as very suspicious characters.

The women's room had its elaborate, monotonous, time-consuming work—carpet-work, embroidery, and fine lace-weaving, which Madame Dupuy did not disapprove of, but considered a necessary element of strict discipline, and praiseworthy in itself, however objectionable in its results. The room had no harpsichord, nor hint of diversion, nor suggestion of occupation beyond books of recipes and accounts. There were one or two treasured volumes of fa-

mous treatises and discourses by Reformed pastors, a work of Jean Calvin himself, and a volume for which, in its simplicity and purity, they had sacrificed, and well sacrificed, country and people, credit, comfort, outward peace. Grand'mère's passion for birds and flowers, and indeed all living things, was less artificially indulged than was common with her country-women, and this rendered the women's room barer, more rigidly matter of fact. Grand'mère's own room, in spite of its great linen bed and curtained doors, was perfectly simple, as became a Huguenot apartment, but she had her *jardinière* in the window, in which she grew spiked lavender and African marigolds, just like those the women of Languedoc stick in their black hair behind their ears ; and she would catch herself calling to Yolande to shut the casement on a chill day, for fear of the cutting mistral. Yes, here, where the old woman who had suffered so much in the long past was to be met peculiarly, there were to be found grace, fancy, dignity, and a kind of refined bravery.

In the women's room the family, the members of which did not meet for breakfast, but supped their messes of soup stepping out of bed, or walking about the house, met for the noon dinner, which was composed largely of vegetables and such fruit as Sedge Pond yielded—a diet before which, as opposed to corned beef and stock-fish, it was quite true, as Grand'mère had boasted, that scurvy and leprosy disappeared. There they ate their equally temperate supper, not drinking any thing so strong and substantial as home-brewed ale, or so spicy as elder-flower wine, but unutterably mawkish and insipid milks and waters of their own compounding, and, in rarer instances, when they had visitors, their vinegar wine. Monsieur pondered, wrote, and calculated, and waited on the mail twice a week, just as busily and assiduously as if he were still the head of a firm. And sometimes he would stroll alone on the terraces or about the country roads, or shoot small birds with a fowling-piece, causing a lively struggle in Grand'mère's mind between regret for the fate of the birds and gratification at her son's diversion. The women worked everlastingly, keeping time to Madame's lamentations, or Grand'mère's praises and thanksgivings and sparkling range of observation and anecdote. There was

no smoking, drinking, dicing, or card-playing; very little even of the feasting which then went on elsewhere throughout England among all classes, from ministers of state down to plough-boys. Indeed the prejudiced people of Sedge Pond esteemed this very sobriety as an important tittle of evidence against the offenders, and often discussed it in one or other of the great rooms of the ale-house as an unmistakable proof that the French family were guilty of far worse practices.

“A can not and a wunnot drink like my neebors, because when ale’s in wit’s out, and a can not afford to miss wit for my gunpowder plots;” so they would represent them as saying.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE RECTOR AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

THE Dupuys had now lived six months in Sedge Pond, tolerated, but looked at askance, unmolested, but without having received a word of welcome as Protestant refugees. And yet there was, at the head of the church at Sedge Pond, a stout spiritual captain who with reason reckoned himself a good Christian and Protestant. Mr. Philip Rolle, the rector of the parish, was one of the best and most influential of the clergy of his district. He was respected by all, a little perhaps because of his good birth, private fortune, and connection with the great Rolles of the Castle, but still more because of the manliness, independence, sobriety, and morality of his life. And this was something at a time when the Church often scandalized the world by having in its ranks bishops, priests, and deacons who were ministers to iniquity in high places, and time-servers as loose and irregular in their lives as the grosser members of their congregations. Such things, when they did not excite violent antipathy, were regarded with indolent indifference. Indeed, the memory of good Bishop Ken and holy George Herbert, and the priests of whom they were the type, seemed to have died out.

Mr. Philip Rolle was a proud, opinionative leader, but at the same time a conscientious, active, benevolent magistrate and clergyman, a brave, resolute gentleman, and a

generous man according to his light. He never missed preaching sermons like military orders, and read the service, whether well or ill, in winter's frost and summer's sultriness. He rode into the thick of mobs and quelled them, perhaps more by his undaunted aristocratic features than his ready riding-whip, which, it must be confessed, he was by no means slow to wield when any refractory sheep was straying from the flock. He would undoubtedly have refused to whistle the Word of God through a key-hole, as he denounced and stormed at simony; and his hands, humanly speaking, were clean, and his heart pure. But he was, notwithstanding all this, as fierce and fanatical as a Pharisee, without a Pharisee's hypocrisy. He would have objected to a dissenter and a democrat more than to an unbeliever and a tyrant, for the one he regarded as a masked, the other as an open enemy.

Thus the rector had been vexed when the Dupuys invaded his parish and accomplished a settlement in it. He was not ignorant, like many of his parishioners, of their claims on his consideration and hospitality as fellow-Prottestants who had suffered in the cause of religious liberty. But he ignored them as long as possible, for he looked upon them as perilous neighbors and their views as dangerous stuff. He was without doubt a Protestant, firmly denying Roman Catholic supremacy, and boldly confessing and abjuring Roman Catholic corruption and error. Had he lived a little earlier, and had rectors gone to the Tower with bishops, he would without fail have gone to the Tower. But as it was, he had no regard for factious subjects, and his gorge rose at the French, whether Protestant or Papist. He classed the French refugees naturalized in England with the receivers of the royal bounty who paid it back in intrigue, conspiracy, and enthusiastic imposture. It was to no purpose, so far as Mr. Philip Rolle and vehement Englishmen like him were concerned, that the French churches in London and elsewhere denounced and repudiated such evil courses, and mourned that the actors in them were generally taken as the representatives of their sect and nation. The rector was inclined to look on the Dupuys as more distasteful and troublesome parishioners than his old plagues, the meddling and leveling family of the Gages of the Mall, who were at least the spawn of an English

brood, and whose vices and errors were those of England.

Mr. Philip Rolle, as was fitting in those republican times, kept a great deal of state, including a family chariot and a black servant. He had been rather lucky in his matrimonial venture, for Madam Rolle was a presentable woman, fair and fat. She believed in her Bible, her husband, her children, and "The County Chronicle." She was a good, commonplace, shallow woman, who had known few cares or sorrows, and was entirely overshadowed by the superior intellect and will of her husband. True, she put forth her whole energy, such as it was, and labored diligently in her small calling, in order that nothing should be wanting in her housewifery. Their family consisted of one son and two daughters. Captain Philip Rolle, at the date of our story, was in the army, and engaged in the American war. He was the very idol of his father's heart, and was reported to be a gallant officer and a promising young man. Madam Rolle, while she contrived that she should be the most notable woman in the parish, seemed also to have determined that her two grown-up daughters, Dorothy and Camilla, should never put their high-heeled feet to the ground, or soil the rosy tips of their fingers, which their mittens left exposed, save for their own special pleasure. This mode of upbringing was, of course, expected to render them all the better fitted for the certain, speedy, and high promotion to which their transcendent merits entitled them, and were sure to command for them. And since the rector had a hand in the polemics of his day and a seat on the bench, he was too busy a man to think the question of women's education of so much consequence, that he should interfere with the training of his daughters. Reprobate parsons of the Lawrence Sterne stamp would interfere, and be very much set on their Lyds speaking French and dancing minuets, with the airs and graces of ma'mselles; but righteous parsons, like Mr. Philip Rolle, left the reading and the writing of their daughters, as well as the cooking and the working, to their mothers and to nature. He who was a lion abroad was, in this respect, a lamb at home. Thus Dorothy and Camilla had, perhaps, the best chance in England, if it were not frustrated, under Providence, by some sense and virtue in their own hearts, of being most

selfish, uncultivated girls, full of affectations, extravagances, and passions, strong as in children.

The two girls, plump and cherry-cheeked, were puffed, powdered, and patched after the best mode, and lolled and yawned, with their lap-dogs on their knees, while black Jasper was actually employed to fan them in the hot weather. But when the wind or their humor changed, they would walk about with their riding-skirts, used as walking-dresses, and the long trains drawn through the pocket-holes. And thus they would tramp through dust and mire to the next market-town or the next country-house, in search of adventure and diversion. They were not over-particular as to the kind; and sometimes they would succeed in coaxing their father to mount one or other on a chariot horse, while he would accompany them himself, seated erectly and stately on another, Black Jasper riding behind, with his knees drawn up to the crown of his head. For a whole dim October day, or white February one, they would go about thus, spurring and clattering.

Mr. Philip Rolle was not one of those men who fight under women's colors. He did not even dream of using his ladies as helpmeets in his office, though the practice was ancient enough, and might have pleased a man who was conservative and opposed to novelties. In his own indulgent, courteous, autocratical way he was strong on the physical and mental inferiority of women, and their inevitable dependence upon man, and he enforced his notions by all sound laws, human and divine. One of the innovations which specially offended and disgusted him in the new doctrines which John Wesley and Fletcher of Madeley had given themselves over to spread, was that of women preaching and teaching, and taking it upon them to judge for themselves against the plain doctrines of revealed truth.

He did not employ Madam Rolle in parochial work beyond the superintendence of the making of a particular posset, or the placing the contents of her larder at his disposal for his respectable poor, whom he wished to feed and clothe by rule and measure, though yet with a certain faithfulness and liberality, for to the poor who had become so through their own deeds and deserts he was a stern jailer and task-master. Dorothy and Camilla might perhaps languishingly or pertly distribute pence on days of doles or church festi-

vals, but the rector scorned female assistance of any more practical character. The idea of women, whom he acknowledged as rational beings called to love and good works, being employed in ministrations of education, enlightenment, or consolation in the best sense, would, in his idea, have been simply to strike at the very root of Protestantism. He would have mourned over it as a return to the ascetic sentimental sisterhoods of Roman Catholicism, with their famished humanity and their spurious pietism, or, at the best, as a drifting into the eccentric, unorthodox, lawless by-roads of Methodism. But Dorothy and Camilla were honest and modest, innocent in their ignorance and their respectfulness to their father, and their affection to their mother. They did not wholly want parts; at least they could not contribute to the evening cheerfulness by song, riddle, and game, and they knew the fashions sufficiently to spoil their complexions and injure their health a little by washes. What more could be expected of the frail things, since it was taken for granted that they also went to church when the weather was not too inclement, said their prayers, and resisted temptation in the shape of private acquaintance with profligate young Squire Thornhills, and such-like scandalous company?

The rectory women had so little fault to find with their world and its morals, that it never entered into the light vaporish heads of Dorothy and Camilla that they were expected to be more than young ladies of breeding, of a little beauty and some accomplishments. Time, if it hung heavily on their hands, was to be got rid of as they could best contrive for their own content, and the maintenance of their very intermittent and wavering sprightliness, which, as was the fashion then, alternated with fits of lowness and spleen, when they would lie abed half-days at a time, and fling their shoes at Black Jasper. But all this, of course, was done in subordination to the great aim of their own and their mother's lives, that in time they should make good matches. The sun of fortune had shone upon their horizon when their distant kinswoman and careless, capricious patroness, Lady Rolle, held racket at the Castle; and their fondest hope and wish now was to be invited to spend a season of frantic dissipation under her ladyship's gamebird wing up in town.

Nothing had more puzzled, astounded, and in a sort aggrieved Madam in the whole course of her sheltered, shallow life, than the disappointing experience she had had of her old school-fellow and companion, Madam Gage, of the Mall. While yet a woman of youth, beauty, parts, birth, and fortune, this lady had risen up and resisted the imposing array of custom and authority, which she had been taught to hold in devoted esteem and veneration. She had declared that there was a higher law and a greater authority on her side, which she dared not gainsay or contradict, and which commanded her to come out of her family and circle, and follow her own course. Hardships, reproaches, mockery, contumely, and condemnation had not moved her. She had separated herself from her "world," and stood alone, and, what was worse, she had entered into alliance with men and women not of Madam Rolle's kind, and who were unlike her in thought, speech, and habit. Madam Gage had worn plain clothes, fed on homely food, risen up early, lain down late, and had established and maintained a household according to her own strange independent rules. Yea, she had even gone abroad, and labored like an ordained priest, except that her labors were all among the poorest, most ignorant, and most depraved, till she had wedded Mr. Gage, of the Mall, one of the few persons of her rank infected with her craze. She had lived and worked with him, called all things by new names, and had founded every kind of unheard-of and uncalled-for institution. The husband and wife had stirred up the meanest working man and woman to try for themselves this new version of religion, and to work it out according to their circumstances and capacities—above all, according to divine gifts profanely accorded to them. These senseless and audacious subversions of duty and harmony had been thorns in the flesh of Mr. Rolle, and had been carried on, to Madam Rolle's indignant marvel and dismay, under the rector's very nose, and by individuals still in communion with his Church.

Yet Madam Gage, apart from her lamentable "perversion," did not fail in any of the relations of life, but was so true a daughter, so kind a sister, and so considerate and constant a friend and mistress, wife and mother, that her kindred forgot and forgave the disgrace and injury she

had done them by her new profession. They restored her to their good graces, and re-installed her in the place of the willing working member of the house, on whom, even though married, all troublesome obligations fall, and are cheerfully accepted, and patiently and faithfully fulfilled. And to the day of her death Madam Gage had never appeared to Madam Rolle with the bearing of a conscious offender, or even of a presuming woman. In her stuff gown, linen neckerchief, and muffling head-dress of frills and bands, Madam Gage had looked the same grand, handsome, frank, high-spirited woman she had looked when she went, powdered as a marchioness, with brocade over her hoop and a pearl drop at her throat. If there was any change, it was a greater depth in her grey eyes, a sweeter curve in her full, firm lip, as though peace and rest had come out of the strife and toil she had chosen, and had lent serenity to her beauty.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE FLAG OF TRUCE, AND HOW IT FARED.

"I WISH you to give me your company in paying a visit," said Mr. Philip Rolle to his wife and daughters, one day, as he entered the parlor with its Indian hangings, worked chair-covers, and dragon china. Madam, in a sack, sat poring over her recipe-book, and Dorothy and Camilla sat with crossed hands and made faces in an opposite mirror.

"Where to, papa?" cried the girls in a breath, jumping up. "You must tell us, that we may know what to wear. Any kind of gadding is better than moping here."

"With all the pleasure in life, girls; we are delighted to go abroad with papa," put in Madam, carefully. "Is the chariot to be had out, sir?"

It is to be noted that Madam did not stand in awe of her husband. She loved him too well for what is generally understood by that phrase, and perfect love in this relation, as in every other, casteth out fear. She comprehended his character so well by long, fond poring over him, that she read what was in his mind as readily as a

much cleverer woman would have read it, and she set herself to humor him. She was aware that, great man as he was, he was not superior to keeping his family in the dark till the last moment as to his intentions, and thus exercising them in blind obedience. And he now answered briefly, "No, there is no need for the chariot ; the attendance of Black Jasper will suffice."

"Surely you might tell us more, papa," implored the girls, half whimpering. "We do not know whether we ought to put on our gauzes and mantles, or our modes and paduasoys."

"Either, my daughters ; the question is not worth a wise woman's consideration. Granting that the wise woman's clothing was silk and purple, I dare avow she put it on at once and did not weigh it in the balance," asserted the provoking man, who yet hardly ever proposed to his daughters any higher questions.

Madam Rolle hastened to step in to still the little ferment and to dissipate the perplexity which was already causing pouts and taps of the heels on the floor. "I am certain my Dorothy and my Camilla will be charmed to have an opportunity of seeing company with their papa and me, whether they are to be in their mantles or their paduasoys. I dare say, my dear, we have to go no farther than the ale-house, to see some travelers who are baiting their horses there, or have broken down, or fear to go on and be benighted. Only, sir, if we are to offer them our hospitality, I hope you will acquaint me in time, as I can not be provided with what I need any nearer than Redham. Surely my Lady Rolle and her sons can not have come suddenly to the Castle without previous warning, or without the girls seeing the coach and the riders, when they have sat in the window there and diverted themselves counting every cart, wagon, and pack-horse that has passed this morning."

"No, Lady Rolle is not at the Castle, that I have heard of," her lord and master assured her, "and the object of the call is none so pleasant that I should be in haste to announce it. I think it is fit we should wait on these French cattle at Shottery Cottage."

"Where you think it right to go, my dear Philip, I am ready and willing to attend you ; but, sir, do you think it

equally safe for the girls?" hesitated Madam, for once in her life doubtful of Mr. Philip Rolle's complete discretion.

"Why, there is no fear these people will kidnap our idle lasses, and send them over the seas to convents to learn to be useful there, especially when their own women have preferred being put into penitentiaries."

"Never mind papa, girls; he has no real intention of depreciating his own, or exalting foreigners over true Britons."

"You are right there, Millie; but if we are to do the thing at all, we had better do it handsomely. These folk have a chit like ours, whom we may as well notice if we notice any of them; it is probable she is the most harmless of the lot."

"If you please, sir, we have seen her," said Dorothy, glibly; "a white-faced girl, who looks as if she had the vapors every day. She sails abroad in silks; and—what do you think?—carries porringers with her own hand, in company with a little old witch, who has always a red-headed stick—the same who threw Goody Gubbins into fits with her sorceries."

"Never mind, child, she'll not bewitch you when I am there to break the charm; and she'll proselytize long before she proselytizes Goody Gubbins." Thus the rector cut her short, objecting to petty gossip.

"I'm not affrighted," Camilla joined in, a little loftily. "And I wish above all things to hear the French prophets."

"What! do you wish to hear them prophesy, Millie?" argued her mother in amazement. "I hope, sir, they'll do nothing of the kind."

"I hope not," said Mr. Philip Rolle, quietly agreeing with his wife; "but you need be under no apprehension, for if they do I shall instantly leave the house," he concluded, with an animation which sounded very much as if it would be rather a relief than otherwise to shake the dust from his feet against the strangers.

"I never stood and heard any offense of the sort," continued Madam, excited and flurried in her turn, "unless it was Lucy Gage once, when she came off her pillion and addressed the crowd which Lady Rolle was going to treat to a harvest supper. I was in the chariot, and Dapple had

cast a shoe, and I was detained in spite of myself. I'd lief-er have walked home barefoot. All I could do was to turn away my head and think to stop my ears when I saw a gentlewoman so eaten up with pride and false religion as to deliver a homily to rustics and gaping clowns in the open road before Sim Hart's, the farrier's. Yet I protest all I heard was no worse and no more untrue than that there was One who gave them all things; and that they should remember his great harvest gathered in by the angels, and should behave godly, righteously, and soberly at their feast. But even if they forgot Him, there was One who remembered them in pity, not in anger; who was ready to save them to the uttermost, and to pluck them like brands from the burning, even at the last moment, if they but willed Him to save them."

"Yes," said the rector, "and the laborers went out of her sight and made themselves beastly drunk, and rioted, and put a torch to Farmer Clere's stack-yard, excusing themselves on the ground that he was not a vessel of grace to be saved without works as they were; and all because a mad woman forgot humility and restraint, and wrested the Scriptures to her own and to her neighbors' destruction."

"Alake! Dolly, Millie, hear what your good father says, and take heed in time; for I knew Lucy Gage when she was as renowned for her modesty and sensibility as for her brave spirit and temper. And now that she is dead and gone, I doubt not, poor soul! she meant no harm; only she was led away and blinded and besotted by wild views, as her husband and her son are to this day."

The girls did not seem much impressed by this appeal, but stood with round eyes of expectation and curiosity.

"I know why our Millie wants so much to hear the French prophets," Dorothy said, putting herself forward to communicate information. "We had it from Mrs. Troutbeck, my lady's maid, when she was down at the Castle for the catgut to make the bell-ribbons, that my lady bought their blessing, and won a hundred guineas at faro, and heard good news of Mr. Dick's ship within the month."

Mr. Philip Rolle frowned. He hated to speak evil of dignities, and he was conservative and aristocrat to the backbone. He loved the very name of Rolle, as Dr. John-

son loved that of Beauclerc. He was not only a kinsman of the house, but he had been governor of my lady's sons, who were his juniors, in the old days before he succeeded to the living of Sedge Pond. He had sat at the Castle board on a different footing from that of most governors, having been an honored friend of the clever, witty, and witless lady of the Castle. The honor of the family was thus doubly in his keeping, and was doubly dear to him, but he could not let the intimation pass without an expression of his disapprobation.

"My lady will have her folly," he said, dryly; "which doth not concern us much, save that we would prefer that it did not tamper with things sacred. When all is done, it seemeth to me that it should be the part of honest people, who hold that blood is thicker than water, not to prate of servants' idle stories, and trumpet the follies of their superiors."

Dorothy stood corrected like a naughty child, and, with all her womanly growth and fine-ladyism, put her finger into her mouth.

Again Madam interposed, and turned the conversation:

"Mr. Rolle, I am in a quandary about these French neighbors. I did learn French, along with drilling and the use of the globes, for a quarter or two at the Miss Cromwells' school at Huntingdon; but 'tis so long ago, that I am under an apprehension I have forgotten every word. Indeed, I shall not attempt to speak it, and I think I had better tell you beforehand, lest you, who are such a scholar yourself, should be disappointed and shamed with me."

"I shall not be disappointed, dame, and shamed I need not be, unless it be on my own account, since, though you are good enough to call me a scholar, and though the language was mightily affected at the Castle in my time, and I did then acquire some skill in it, I doubt me much whether I could pass muster after so great an interval, unless before such a connoisseur as you. But why distress ourselves with the supposed obligation, since we have a couple of daughters, new off the irons of polite accomplishment, ready to relieve us, and show off for us in all the languages under the sun."

"Papa, papa!" cried Dorothy, "how can you propose

such a thing, when you know that last spring, when we rode into Redham, you forbade us to learn Italian because old Madame Viol had been an opera-dancer, and you said you did not affect the opera, and did not care for us picking up its jargon."

"And you took us away from Monsieur Delaine," chimed in Camilla, "just when we were getting into the fairy tales, and the contre-dances, because he sent Dolly such a set of ribbons as she had longed for on her birthday, and instructed her to fib when you questioned her about it, and lied directly when you taxed him with it."

Thus Dorothy and Camilla declined the appointment, and vindicated their refusal.

"And suppose these Shottery Cottage gentry are also among the prophets, and begin to prophesy in their own language, it will be speaking in an unknown tongue to you," suggested the rector.

The two girls looked blank at the self-evident proposition.

"Will my dear girls never be made sensible that their papa loves to joke with them?" remonstrated Madam.

"And softly, Mistress Dorothy and Mistress Camilla, I should as soon look to see Black Jasper do a turn of hard work for his diet and his livery, as to find misses of any kind prove that they had not picked their father's pockets by putting into the simplest practice the lessons on which he has spent a power of money."

The party started at last, and as they were complying with a professional duty and form of society, they were marshaled in order. His Reverence and Madam walked first, she quite stately in her parson's wife's hood and pattens, for the streets of the village were rarely passable even in dry weather, and he stalking gravely, in his cauliflower wig and black stockings. Dorothy and Camilla, having barely got over the grievance of not being allowed time to decide between their mantles and their paduasoys, went quarreling all the way as to the right of each to a single extraordinary crimson parasol, such as Chinamen may be seen to carry nowadays. It was a cast-off parasol of Lady Rolle's, the only one in these parts, and a great curiosity. Behind them again came Black Jasper, to whom and to his master it was a misfortune that he did every act of his life

with exaggerated solemnity. He was a simple, timid, attached fellow, with a great gaping mouth, rolling eyes, and projecting ears which were like ebony handles to the ebony casket of his body in its green and yellow livery. His excessive solemnity and nervous fear of Mr. Philip Rolle were his chief faults. Why there should have been such an element of the ludicrous in the profound gravity and importance with which Black Jasper stepped with long strides while he carried Madam's Bible or her basket, or a cudgel for the presumed defense of the ladies, it would be difficult to say; but there it was, and Mr. Philip Rolle, a sensitive man, was keenly alive to it. But Black Jasper was an institution of the period, which could not be got rid of without barbarous injury to the poor fellow, who was so far from home, and so incapable of procuring his livelihood by his own exertions. Black Jaspers were fixtures and heirlooms then, and it was a lax and benevolent as well as a vain element in men, which made them adopt them. Besides, Black Jasper was Captain Philip's spoil, whom he had brought home after one of his campaigns, and it would have been a slight to the beloved phoenix of the house had the family turned the negro adrift. Mr. Philip Rolle aimed at being just to all men, and a connection with his son, however slight, was the greatest claim to his regard. But Black Jasper's inveterate, uncontrollable terror of his firm, sharp face, his clear ringing voice, and his abrupt authoritative manner, irked and provoked him. The negro, all the while, was like a docile, tender dog, and he but served his "Massa's Massa" the more sedulously because of his desperate dread.

The Dupuys were all at home, the women being together in their room. Monsieur was sent for to receive and meet the advances of the parish clergyman, and he at once obeyed the summons.

Never, perhaps, was there a worse assorted company, and Grand'mère alone of all its members was perfectly composed and at her ease. Indeed, at the beginning of the visit, she looked glad and gracious as well as grateful. But there was little wonder that Madame Dupuy, distrusting the English as she did, and bearing a grudge at all mankind, in her gloomy pre-occupations over Huguenot sufferings, should raise her neck out of the folds of her

*fichu* like a bundle of saffron bones, and look down stiffly and sourly upon the visitors. And there was just as little wonder that Yolande, though yearning painfully after something like communion with companions such as herself, should draw shyly to her grandmother's side, and only look sadly and strangely at the giddy, tricked-out, affected figures of Dorothy and Camilla Rolle. They, on their part again, glanced contemptuously round the bare, sombre room, which every way contrasted with their ideas of French luxury and gayety. But Monsieur, though bland as a Frenchman, showed no pleasure at the sight of his guests, nor gave any token of a wish to encourage and improve their acquaintance. He was scrupulously civil, he bowed low, and was more like a grand bourgeois, with his *noblesse des cloches*, than ever, but he did not grasp Mr. Philip Rolle's right hand of fellowship very cordially. On the contrary, there was a covert tone of sarcasm and offense in Monsieur's bearing, which the rector was not slow to perceive and understand.

The conversation was conducted in fair English, so far as Monsieur and Grand'mère were concerned. Yolande was dumb. Madame Dupuy employed her broken English in making harsh, scornful replies which quite annihilated the simple phrases with which Madam Rolle thought to make conversation at all times and places. And not only this. To the still greater dismay and indignation of the rector's lady, Madame was guilty of giving forth withering insinuations regarding the rector's latitudinarianism, and so plain and direct were they, though in halting English, that even innocent Madam Rolle could not mistake them.

When the rector, as a man of the world and a liberal Protestant clergyman, attempted to engage Monsieur in a discussion of French politics and the general prospects of Protestantism in Europe, Monsieur answered with smiling references to the exiled royal family, whom Mr. Rolle and his college of Oxford were supposed to favor without having risen and restored to them their kingdom. And then he went on to speak of the great gulf between Calvinists and Lutherans, which was so wide that the Roman Catholic bishops who had presided over the ceremony of bringing France to a unanimity of faith by the rough conver-

sions of the dragonnades, had offered to overlook the mild profession of the last, so that the first damnable heresy were abjured.

"*Allons, then, Monsieur the rector,*" insisted Monsieur, with a willful misconception, "one can not tell whether to reckon the Protestants in Europe by thousands or millions, seeing that the Catholics bear no enmity to your pure form and simple hierarchy—your altars and saints' days and lord bishops—that they regard you as brothers, in fact."

At the same time Madame Dupuy and Madam Rolle were at still greater cross-purposes, the one mortally offending and horrifying the other. Madam Rolle had begun by the simpering, unsuspicious inquiry how Madame Dupuy had liked the rector's thesis on Sunday, and had proceeded to remark that her good man was acknowledged to be a fine scholar, though she should not say it. This she would take it upon her to say, however, that he practiced what he preached, that there was not a better living clergyman, or a more virtuous gentleman in England, and she ought to know his private worth as well as another. Moreover, Madam had reason to believe that the rector's theses had been noted and admired in high quarters, and that something would come of them, as something ought to come, for certainly they were too pious and eloquent to be wasted on an ordinary congregation like that of Sedge Pond. And did not Madame think that the music of the church would be much improved when the pipe and tabor were replaced by an organ such as Mr. Handel played on? Lady Rolle and others of the quality had generously consented to subscribe for it whenever they had time to get up the subscription and could spare the cash, and all they had now to do was to settle the dispute among themselves as to which of them should superintend the building of the instrument up in London.

In disposal of this prattle, Madame caused the hairs of Madam Rolle's head to stand on end by the unheard-of presumption and effrontery of the declaration that she did not like the theses at all. They might be very clever, ah! very clever, but she had not been accustomed to these theses, which might have been heathen discourses. She had abandoned her country, where the sun shone and one was

warm sometimes, for the sake of the preaching which bade dying men flee to the shelter of the Cross. She did not comprehend exactly what Madam Rolle wished to say of her husband. As for the music of the church, she dared say the pipe and song of Sedge Pond might be very good music, she was no judge of music; but she had not listened with pleasure to the praises of God since she heard the sublime psalms of Bèze swelling through the hearts of a proscribed assembly, and awaking the echoes of the desert. Having overthrown and trampled upon Madam Rolle, Madame Dupuy crowned her enormities by intruding into the *tête-d-tête* of Monsieur and the rector, frowning upon Monsieur without ceremony.

“*Oui, oui*, Monsieur, it is good to hear you on orthodoxy of creed and simplicity of worship, you who have ceased to condemn almost any deed short of fire and murder. From necessity, my dear Grand’mère? You are too good, too good, for a mocker like Monsieur your son. Bah! necessity is another word for greed, and greed is sleeve to sleeve with the god of a little country named Canaan, an adorable god which called itself Moloch. All the men are infidels nowadays. They do not deny their faith, for why? They are too obstinate, too proud, that is all. Which of them would die for it? Which of them would count all things but loss for it? Count all things but loss! They trade upon it, they gain money by it, they adopt another country and another creed, they lament no more on the anniversary of the Revocation; they are consoled, they are rich as the world was when the flood came, as Sodom and Gomorrah were till the fire and brimstone fell.”

The woman was stark, staring mad: could there be more unmistakable evidence than her loud railing at her lawful husband, who was taking snuff, imperturbably addressing her as “my very good Philippine,” and imploring her, without *empressemement*, not to agitate herself; while she faithfully and gently paid her duty to the individual whom Madam Rolle hesitatingly designated the “light-headed, aged woman, dressed up like Madam’s young daughters,” and all because the fine old Frenchwoman was a thousand times more elegant than the clumsy young English girls. It was far from safe company for them;

Madam Rolle wished she were well free of it, for she could scarcely conceive that the French prophets could be more immoral, though they might be more blasphemous. And then Dorothy and Camilla were there, swallowing every word of the unseemly, scandalous defiance ; though Madam herself allowed they were sometimes slow enough to imbibe what was good for them.

The joy of Grand'mère's hospitality was soon extinguished ; but she commanded herself sufficiently to take part in the conversation, and do her best to cover the rudeness of her daughter-in-law, and the but half-concealed cynicism of her son, and to try, by her own sweet intelligence and bright vivacity, to make some return to the natives for their condescension, besides that of sullen recrimination and bitter pleasantry. And here Monsieur her son, and Madame her daughter-in-law, made room for her words, gave them respectful attention, with just the faintest qualm of Madame's self-righteousness, and the slightest hanging of Monsieur's worldly-wise, scheming head. It was the Rolles who regarded her as a second-rate, flighty character, and put no weight on her gentle interposition. Even the rector, who had sufficient parts and taste to discern that the matter of her discourse was full of superior sense, and the manner of it more exquisite than that of any of the great ladies he had known and admired in his youth, failed to give Grand'mère her due, for sturdy English prejudice, which many regard as a grace, had blinded him. As for Madam Rolle, she was so stupid and stolid as to the qualities of the two women, and their claims, that when Grand'mère, with tact and tenderness, introduced the topic of the American War—in which all England was interested—the Rolles deeply interested, since their son and brother was in the heat of it—and ventured a warm hearted, quite sincere reference to the young hero of Sedge Pond, who was then winning his laurels on the Susquehannah or the Potomac, and whom all the residents at Sedge Pond delighted to honor, Madam Rolle, with her one idea, made no softened response to breathing, feeling Grand'mère, but chose to make instead a final appeal to stony Madame Dupuy, asking her wistfully if she was the mother of a son as well as of a daughter. Then with a heightened color Madam Rolle proceeded to the delicate

investigation as to whether Madame had any countrymen engaged in the great war, for her Philip had mentioned that Frenchmen were fighting in the campaign ; and though it was on the wrong side of the quarrel, the grounds of it were so far away, and they at Sedge Pond had so little to do with the mother country's right to tax a dish of tea in the colonies, that Madam had a dim impression that they two women might forget that their young men were enemies so long as they were not in personal conflict.

But Madame Dupuy knew nothing of the continent of America, and cared nothing for it, unless in respect to the Huguenot emigrants in the Carolinas. She did not even know that there was a mighty struggle going on across the Atlantic, by which men were being torn from their peaceful homes and were going the length of engaging savage Indians to come with their tomahawks and poisoned arrows to aid Christian and Saxon brothers against each other ; and indeed England might have quarreled with every one of her colonies, and driven them to the same position as the Americas, for any thing Madame would have minded.

Grand'mère, in her rare good-will and her good-breeding, was cast into the shade and thrust to the wall by the Rolles. Despair, however, was so foreign to Grand'mère, whatever she might aver to the contrary, in her vivid French phrases, that she thought better of the situation, and preferred to make the most of it, by addressing herself in the kindest manner to a humble neutral member of the party.

According to the etiquette of the day, Black Jasper had two ways of disposing of himself. He might repair to the servants' hall, or he might remain in attendance on his master and mistress. There happened to be no servants' hall at the Shottery Cottage, and in the kitchen Priscilla was as hard to make acquaintance with, and as fain to rebuff raw candidates for her favor, as were the heads of the house. Black Jasper had, therefore, after a full quarter of an hour of uncertainty and waddling between the door of the room and that of the kitchen, settled on the skirts of the gentry, taking his chance of his master's vehement impatience and scathing ridicule, and of the tricks and tyranny of the two young madams.

Grand'mère roused herself from her little depression at the sight of the sable face with its goggle eyes. She did not laugh openly or secretly, though she possessed naturally that merry heart which doeth good like medicine and is health to the bones. Grand'mère did not even need to restrain her guileless gayety from considerate care for what might be Black Jasper's weakness on that point.

From the background Grand'mère waved to Black Jasper, and he, glancing at his master the while, stumbled toward her. Grand'mère not only dealt with Black Jasper as flesh and blood, but she pitied him as the black child, oppressed, bought and sold, and yet toyed with by the civilized white man and women. She wanted to do what she could to make up to him. She asked anxiously whether her good *garçon* had health and strength in the cold north. She bestowed on him a small piece of money, with an apology for its smallness, and an entreaty that he would accept it for the sake of the ideal Negro, who was without doubt the type and pattern of many a generous, devoted black man. She opened her particular cupboard, and taking out some preserved fruit, recommended the sweet-toothed black to try it, and to tell her whether it resembled guavas or pines. And Black Jasper, totally unused to such delicate attentions, grinned, scraped, darted furtive glances at his master, and without waiting for an answer, obeyed his own instinct, and became on the spot a bond slave, for the second time in his life, to "the beauffle old Ma'am."

The rector had spirit enough to resent what was little short of insult in his host's treatment, and more than enough temper to show his resentment.

"I perceive, sir, that I have been under a misapprehension in intruding on you," he said, in a white heat of wrath. "I may honestly say that I meant to do my duty and confer a benefit. My parishioners attach some consideration to the fact whether or not a stranger is known to their clergyman. But if I mistake not, and read your face aright, my absence would be better than my company, to use a country phrase; and you may depend upon it, I shall force my acquaintance on no man."

"*Après vous*, Monsieur the Rector, replied Monsieur, in

his sardonic French politeness ; “I beg to thank you for your intended protection. All I shall say is, that I think I can take care of my own head, and the heads of my family, my own self.” And he bowed Mr. Rolle off.

Thus the interview was a total failure. Mr. Philip Rolle carried out his dignified presence haughtily, intending never again to waste it on traitors and impostors. The women of the Rolle family, for their part, were only conscious that the visit had been a mistake and a blunder, and, in a panic lest there should be more high words and violence, even though Mr. Rolle was a clergyman, they huddled together, and mother and daughters jostled each other out. Black Jasper, in the half-turned state of his head, was oblivious to all that had been passing, save his own delicious treat ; but the noise of the ladies’ exit aroused him, and, throwing down Grand’mère’s empty can, he started in pursuit of his owners, turning back so often, however, to make capering salutes to Grand’mère, that Mr. Philip Rolle observed the pantomime, and called out loudly that he would have his black rascal whipped if he did not behave like a rational creature—a line of conduct as impossible to Black Jasper under certain influences as sight is to the blind.

“*Voilà !* a good riddance,” cried Madame. “Why should they come here prying upon us, and wasting our time ? Yolande, child, to your lace. I shall finish the Genève account of Barbe Yot, who was imprisoned at Aigues Mortez, and clothed in a foul hospital dress, from which the dogs fled howling, and refreshed for farther tortures by being plunged into the stagnant, slimy moat till her breath went out ; and of her sister, Mesdéllices, who was shipped among a hundred other young women in a transport, to lie like rats in the hold till they, or rather the ghostly skeletons of them, were landed, and put up by the government, in lots for the convenience of the cotton-planters of Guadalupe and Martinique—that is what I could tell of their America and their Indies, but I would not tell it to these popinjays.”

But Grand’mère sat and looked ruefully after the retreating company, the only disinterested company which had sought the Dupuys at the Shottery Cottage.

“I am afflicted that I have vexed you, my mother,” said

Monsieur, coming and bending coaxingly over the old woman's chair ; "but it is true what Philippine says."

"Ah ! for once, for once," interpolated Philippine, with great animation and asperity, as she courtesied to Monsieur ; "though she is not of this world, it is her pride and boast that she has not her part with the men of this world, like you, Monsieur, if you do not repent."

"They are spies and despots," continued Monsieur, quietly ignoring his wife. "They come to mock us—to patronize and meddle with us. Why should we let them come when we are sufficient for ourselves, and when we dwell in peace here?"

"I know not if you are right, my son," argued Grand'mère, meekly. "But for me, I can not see why we should not accept their visit as from a good heart. Whether they *mean* it for good or not, I can not tell. Where is the necessity or the advantage of living like owls," added Grand'mère, with her accustomed shrewdness, "when no one has offered to molest or persecute us for a long time ? We are letting the child grow up more secluded and solitary than if she were behind the grating. I think we should have taken an act of friendship as if it were friendship, that therein also the saying of the Apostle to the Gentiles might have been fulfilled ; and whether our fellow-creatures mixed with us in simplicity or in guile, at least they mixed with us, and for that we should rejoice. Who knows whether our faith and love might not have changed the base metals of fraud and falseness on their part into the gold of true love ? Alas ! my son. But this, at least, I pray you to accord me, my wayworn, cumbered Herbert, do not poison the young girl's mind ; let her at least learn to hope that there may be some good in this poor old world."

So Grand'mère was left to talk with Yolande of the events of the day, to draw forth the girl's opinion, and resist and refute single-handed the evil force of example.

"I am sorry that you have not made friends with the English pastor's daughters, little one," says Grand'mère, shaking her head, in the wise clear prevision of wisdom.

"So am not I, Grand'mère," retorts the girl, with her latent repressed passion and scorn. "They are silly, these English girls, as well as saucy, Grand'mère, with such sauce

—insipid hot water without strength or sweetness. Did you see how they whispered and tittered till they ran away?"

"No, I did not see, I could not see for sighing over a wet hen of a *malpropre, distract* girl, who forgot to do the honors of her own household, and of her bread and salt."

Yolande winced, and endeavored hastily to turn aside this thrust by a pleasantry.

"Grand'mère, I saw no bread and salt going, except with regard to the black miserable."

"Fic! you are miserable yourself, Yolande, to call him so," Grand'mère checked her favorite smartly; "and if you think silliness (if there is silliness, I have never said so) is a bar to friendship, you are no better than one of the foolish pedants of the Hôtel Rambouillet, whom Molière scoured. Silliness is a greater, more incurable misfortune than being a cripple, or deaf and dumb. Shall we not cherish the unfortunate? What mean we then by the terms, Maison de Dieu, Hôtel de Dieu, for our hospitals and our mad-houses, but that he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord. I tell you, Queen of Sheba silliness on the one side, and wisdom on the other, never prevented either friendship or love worth the having. It is only hardness and falseness of heart, godlessness and no love to spare from one's self, that can dry and wither the heart, else why do I care for you, poppet, or, in reverse, why do you care for an out-of-date doting old woman?"

"Grand'mère! Grand'mère!"

"Grand'mère me no more. Some have said that silliness is an absolute requirement, that there can not be royal condescension without a big and a little soul. But I don't say so; for it is blessed to receive also, only less blessed than to give. And you might have helped each other, you young girls," Grand'mère went on; "you might have bartered your best qualities, learned to understand truth and nobleness in other natures and under other names, and have grown more kind and tender, warmer at heart, and more glad of spirit. It is a bad friend of your age and station who is not better than no friend, my dear. I love not the religion of restriction—'Touch not, taste not, handle not, which things all perish in the using.' Is it not so, Yolandette?"

“Grand’mère!” exclaimed Yolande, coming out of a brown study, “why does all the world hate us Huguenots?”

“That goes without saying, and ought we to break our hearts for it? Ought we not to rejoice a little because of another sect which was everywhere spoken against once, and which happened to be the salt of the earth, nevertheless. In our case there are special causes. We were a great power at the first. Condé, Coligni, Castelnau, Mornay, Sully, Henry IV., all belonged to us. The Tremouilles, the Rochefoucaulds, the Rohans, were on our side. Catherine de’ Medici and her women who knew best, made a fashion of singing our psalms. Then we were betrayed and betrayers, broken and crushed, and the vulgar loved to tread on our heads. That is one explanation, and we could not help that; but we have ourselves to blame as well as the four seasons, when we can not count our brethren’s hatred all joy, and when it is necessary that we sing the penitential psalms for it. We have been godly, rigidly righteous, and enduring; but we have been at the same time haughty, stern, unmerciful, implacable in our judgments, at least when judgment was all our possibility. We have been like the elder brother of the prodigal son, my grandchild, who was very exemplary and very unkind. It is a marvel how many religious men are like him, considering who told his story, and pointed out how ungenerous and unmanly he was, and how unlike his father. But we had not all the good things of this life; thanks to God we were not like him there. We had hard lines—too hard for a girl like you to comprehend, *mignonne*. Consider, we were not allowed to call ourselves in law husbands and wives; our little children were taken from us, and given, with their share of our goods, to pretended converts, who were no better than traitors in our houses. We were forbidden to pray for his majesty the king, we were so vile; and when a poor pastor strewed rosemary on his young daughter’s bier, and had her followed to the grave by young girls like herself and you, he was arrested by the authorities, condemned and punished for an impudent mimicry of the holy church’s rites.”

“And the English pastor, too, who knows better!”

Yolande pursued her own disturbed indignant reflections.

"He knows better," Grand'mère repeated, emphatically; and then, to Yolande's bewilderment, the old woman finished unexpectedly, "I like that man. How he goes against the grain when he believes it is demanded of him. How he is honest and honorable! I could trust him with my life, could trust him better with my honor, better than all with my faith. He might detest me, but he would not wrong me by a straw; he would put his right hand into the flames first. He would sacrifice his Isaac, his Joseph, his gallant young captain first! He is righteous; he has a will like that! He is like Jean Calvin in his will; he is not like Calvin in his burning heart and his keen wit; but he is like Calvin in his will."

Grand'mère, like all very womanly women, paid huge homage to manliness; and she, who was of the Church the earthly origin of which is said to have been "Geneva, Calvin, and persecution," comprehended Calvin.

"You speak of hatred, Yolande," descended Grand'mère, in the enthusiasm which Calvin's name always awoke in her; "Calvin was hated. It is not good for man or woman not to be hated, but they must be loved also, yes, loved as men's own souls, by few it may be—ah well! sometimes the fewer the lovers the better. But Calvin was not loved by few, or a little; he was loved by Bèze, his wife—the poor widow, by his step-children, by Geneva, by France, by Scotland. People will speak of how he burned Servetus and clipped out a woman's hair. Go! They will not speak of how he held the hearts of a city, a nation, in his brave hand, and moulded them under God to religion and virtue. The great Englishman was thought to be wise when he said that the ill that men did lived after them, the good was often buried with their bones. When it is the very reverse, my child, then it will be heaven."

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE TRUCE OF GOD.

THE arrival and departure of the mail by the coaches which ran between London and Norwich, only failed in entralling interest to those who, like the mass of the Sedge Pond people, received no letters, or only such few and far between ones as made great incidents in their lives. But even the Hodges and the Sams, the Jennies and the Nans, who got no letters, and looked for none, hung about, and never wearied of the chance of beholding the coach, with its escort armed and mounted, its guard with his sounding horn, and its sleepy or noisy passengers in night-caps and cocked hats, who called for their dinner or for tankards of lamb's-wool ale, or glasses of French brandy.

Monsieur Dupuy was a regular attendant in the white-washed porch of the ale-house on such occasions. He frequently received letters of outlandish shape, addressed in queer handwriting; and those who would unhesitatingly and adventurously strive to read them over his shoulder, would see no more than two or three lines of Monsieur's jargon, sometimes actually no more than a row of figures.

Mr. Philip Rolle was no less punctual in waiting for the coach's arrival, to get the last news of the war in which his son was engaged. When the news were very exciting, particularly when they contained any mention of Captain Philip, or when Captain Philip himself wrote or modestly alluded to his own promotion or any credit his company had gained, Mr. Philip Rolle would sit in state and read the letter, and talk it over in the porch of the ale-house, assiduously waited upon and looked up to by Master Swinfen, mine portly, consequential, self-seeking host, and his nimble, loose-tongued, cowed-in-vain partner. The great man would be supplied with a toast and a tankard, and a single pipe, for he would allow no more—neither to himself nor to any other person. As he sat in state and paid the lawing, he laid down the law and would answer all inquiries after the young captain more patiently and

affably than any one who had seen his high head elsewhere would have expected. Mr. Rolle would also wait on for the news-letters and prints, for he was much interested in what was taking place in London. He was always curious to know if Mr. Wilkes had committed any fresh offense, or Lord North's Ministry had become better liked. But he would not discuss these questions on the ale-house bench, though he had little opportunity of discussing them in any other quarter, nor would he gossip of the floods or the robberies, which were common occurrences. He liked human statistics, like all clear-headed, active-minded men, but it was only the subject of Captain Philip which could unlock the flood-gates of Mr. Rolle's heart. Captain Philip's name, written in its core, was the one soft spot, to touch which would cause the stout spiritual soldier to unbend, and betray him into prattling like a woman or a child.

The rector was thus standing one day with his ruffled hands behind his back, his shovel hat shading his eyes from the autumn sun and marking him out at once from the lusty laborers and the coach passengers in their cocked hats, as the last alighted to stretch their legs, examine the priming of their pistols, and swallow a morsel while the horses were being changed. Monsieur, for once, was not there. He was from home on one of his journeys to London or Norwich, but the usual knot of grooms, stable-boys, and tapsters were gathered round the body of the coach, as well as Master Swinfen and his spouse, with the working men and their wives and children, the rector forming a nucleus. And the group was not bent on a passing diversion alone, but was all alive and expectant of a generous entertainment, eager for something to speak of over their broth cans and groat bowls for weeks to come.

The village was already lying under the long low beams of an October sun, which lighted with mellow lustre the "Waäste" bristling brown, and the Castle woods burning red and yellow in the fires of the first frosts. Important mails were expected from the seat of war. It was known that the rebels had invaded Canada, and it was fully credited that they greatly outnumbered the English army. Even though they did, however, it was confidently believed that they must have been beaten back with so signal a slaughter that the disaster at Bunker Hill would have

been clean outweighed by a sure prospect of the war's reaching a triumphant termination.

The rector was drawing himself up, as one towering by anticipation in the reflected glory of his son. He was not flurried; Captain Philip had seen so much service in different parts of the world, and appeared to have borne so charmed a life through it all, that it seemed as if nothing so contemptible as the rusty sword or pistol of a ragged American volunteer could harm him. Neither was Mr. Rolle absorbed in his approaching exaltation, for he was privately instructing Master Swinfen to broach a cask of October, to have pipes laid out, and to make a dole of black and white puddings to the women. The order was overheard, and a whisper arose that the rector had already received special intelligence, and that Captain Philip must have won a colonel's epaulettes at least. Indeed the populace would not have been much surprised although it had been a general's white feathers.

At last, with the usual strain and sway, and immense clatter and flourish, the "Royal Oak" appeared in sight, and was hailed with as much acclamation as if it had never been seen before. Way was made for it and its attendant horsemen to draw up before the ale-house door.

"Aught for me, Will Guard?" cried the rector, breaking in on the landlord's usual inquiry as to what was doing on the road.

"Ay, ay, summut, your worship; you might set up a dispatch-box or a private messenger," grumbled the guard, presuming on the large, official-looking packet he was disengaging from the boot. "It is word from the Americas. We heard tell the *Fairweather* was in port, but we were off to catch the day-light before the town was up to their sort. You may just let us hear, sir, whether the rebels have laid down their arms. I have a brother's lad gone out with Howe."

"With all my heart, Will Guard, if the word is worth the hearing," replied the rector, and, still standing in the porch, he broke open the seals of the packet. It contained, besides a number of papers, sundry small articles which the sender had taken the opportunity of forwarding securely—Captain Philip's old epaulettes, which he had worn with such honor, and had now put off for still higher dis-

tinction ; a pouch in Indian work, and a little box corded and fastened—remembrances which the kind young captain might have sent home to his mother and his sisters, or even to Black Jasper, who, coming along the street at that moment on one of Madam's commissions, sidled up to the others.

The rector cast a rapid glance over the first lines of the letter, started, and put his hand to his breast, as though he had been shot, then stepped back and lifted up a grey ghastly face. Without uttering a syllable to the hushed, expectant company, the dullest face in which was awed and struck, he made direct for the rectory gate, presided over by its stone monsters. As he walked on, the people, not daring to mingle themselves with his trouble as they had mingled with his triumph, looked after him with smothered sighs and groans, which at last swelled to a clamor of lamentation. As he went on, looking neither to left nor right, he stumbled over a stone in the road, and the negro lad, stunned rather than rightly apprised of the weight of the catastrophe—the great tragedy which had been enacted last fall over the seas, and after many a delay and detour had this day reached the quiet Sedge Pond home—rushed forward obsequiously to remove the obstacle from his master's path. Obeying an instinct, Mr. Philip Rolle was pushing the intruder out of his way, when another impulse seized him ; he grasped the black servant's shoulder with a strength which caused Jasper to writhe and recoil, and communicated to the servant the misery which was wringing his heart and convulsing his brain, and which he must speak out or die.

"Black Jasper, Captain Philip's fellow, your 'massa' is dead, shot through the head last year when the rebels took Ticonderoga. They have sent me his epaulettes and his box as a token, I imagine. Do you hear, Black Jasper?" the rector broke off, and went on repeating his terrible statement, with his voice rising at length to a shout, "My son Philip, my only son Philip, is dead ! is dead !"

With that he broke down and burst into weeping, an awful sight to see—and so he entered at the rectory gate, and walked through the clipped hollies and yews to the house, while the shocked and appalled villagers gazed and

listened intently, and the touched travelers thought they could hear a wail and a cry coming faintly, but with piercing acuteness, from beyond the pleasance.

That same October noon Grand'mère had been sunning herself in the Shottery Cottage arbor, which was then hung round with tawny leaves and clusters of blue-black berries. She was looking at the trouts, still occasionally leaping in the pond which the villagers called the Stew, and at the bees also sunning themselves after they had laid up their competence of honey, and were resting, like her, with their work done for the season ; and as she looked she listened to the robin, which, like a sweet and virtuous soul, only lifts up its song of trust and praise the more cheerily and patiently when the whole world languishes in decay and approaching death. In the autumn brightness of the home scene, Grand'mère's fancy was spirited away to her native land and the scenes of her youth. She was describing to Yolande, who was plaiting straw on a stool at her knee, how different from this England, now sodden in its greenness, was her Languedoc and Provence. She kindled up as she spoke of the glory of color there was in the very salt lakes and marshes, in the arid limestone rocks, and the bare heaths of the south, contrasted with the green luxuriance of England, blanched by such dim light as fell from the cold, pallid northern skies. And she grew eloquent as she told that there were distant snowy peaks and blue defiles ; and that, for patches of corn, meadow, and woodland, they in France had soft grey olive and deep green and golden mulberry and orange gardens ; and that for honeysuckle and briony they at home had among the grass scarlet anemones with the living blue of salvias and the white of asphodel by the roadside, while there were tall pink gladioli in the glades, and spreading pink daphne on the uplands, and oleanders, jasmines, and bay-trees breaking the hedges. The nightingale sang there over April roses and November violets. It was such a land of fertility and barrenness, passion and repose, as King David ruled over, as the son of David walked in, saying, "Consider the lilies, how they grow."

Grand'mère was interrupted by Priscille, in her calamanco petticoat, linen jacket, and linen cap, advancing toward the pair. The maid had downcast, grudging, in-

troverted eyes, not because she was a suspicious character, but because they had early had her club-foot perpetually suspended before them, while at the same time they had not cared to look at it; and she walked with a heavy, dogged lameness, and carried a basting-spoon in her hand, as one who minded her business, notwithstanding that she had an ancient quarrel with the world.

"Don't 'ee be overcome, old madam, don't 'ee," insisted Priscille.

"I am not overcome, Priscille," declared Grand'mère, sedately, though her peachy complexion waned a little waxen, and her grey eyes glanced up at her son's window. "What is there that I should be overcome?"

"Now, speak out, Prie," cried Yolande, jumping up like a squirrel, and scattering her straws to the four corners of the garden. "What is it? The good God be praised, it can be naught to Grand'mère. Oh, my heart! what is it, my woman?"

"Did 'ee ever hear such a child, did 'ee?" protested Priscille, indignantly. "She'll be mum for days, and then she'll break out chattering like a pie. An' she do have littered the garden for a week, and me with the beet-root and the carrots to lift at my own hand. If it isn't that black beetle from the rectorry have come howling here. No, I don't call no names; but he is liker a beetle than aught else in creation, an' it be not an ape, and the term came to my tongue end. It is all wrong at the parson's. News has come that the young captain's gone—gone to his rest, madam, by a hard road. Parson is in a sad taking, for though he may have preached as often as there are hairs in his wig that 'all flesh is grass,' he can not abide that his own grass should be cut down in its bloom any the more for that. The young mistresses are cowering and grueing like turkey pouts, or screeching hoarse like the bittern in the Waäste. Madam herself, she's lying atop of her bed, where they laid her in a swoond, and struggling to swallow down her mother heart, because she is still a mother, though she choke and die in the deed. The maids trow she will, the short-sighted woman. Now, madam, didn't 'ee promise not to be overcome?" cried Priscille reproachfully, as Grand'mère wrung her hands, and her tears—the transparent crystal tears of the aged

—fell like rain, for she could still cry for others though she had long ceased to cry for herself.

“My good Priscille, let sorrow and sympathy have their way. Do not attempt to stifle the bitter spring like the poor Madam up at the rectory, lest the soil be poisoned. Alas! and the sun is so warm even in England, and the world is so fair, and men and women are in such trouble, Priscille.”

“What would you have, Madam? It were always so,” argued Prie, dogmatically.

“No, big Prie,” denied Grand’mère, recovering herself.

“And ‘twill be always so,” said Prie, still more obstinately.

“Least of all, my Prie,” negatived Grand’mère, decidedly brightening up and clasping her hands in silent hope. “Have shame of yourself, a Christian woman, to say so.”

“Leastways in your time and mine, Madam,” maintained Prie, fighting for the last word, and illustrating it by a jerk of her club foot. “And since we have gotten our own stock, I do not see that we ought to take a burden of other folks. That there bullering jackdaw, Black Jasper, must see you, and you must go up to the rectory, according to his story—a pretty story, when you have not been within a strange door, or bidden to it, since you came to Sedge Pond. If they forget me when they are glad, they need not mind me when they are sad, say I.”

“Oh, that poor Priscille!” exclaimed Grand’mère, as if at a climax of vexation and disappointment. “Does she not know that that is the greatest compliment of all! A brother is born for adversity. See you that a Christian should recognize a brother through all disguises. And what care I, though they can manage their prosperity, to which they invite their distant relations and their slight acquaintances, without me. I—I love better to be the brother.”

After all, it was Black Jasper, and not the Rolles, who sought Grand’mère. In the extremity, the black boy had gone so entirely out of himself, that he had acted on his own responsibility. His philosophy had been simple enough. Massa had told Black Jasper, Captain Philip’s fellow, of his loss first of all. That had made the most profound impression, and Jasper was not without pride in

his sorrow when he thought of it. Then followed the plain deduction that Captain Philip's fellow was bound to do something in order to respond to the trust Captain Philip's massa and his family had put in him in their distress. Black Jasper could not cudgel his brains; he could only leap to a conclusion. The Rolles had no near neighbors their equals in rank—none with whom he was very familiar. But a bright idea led him to except the French family at the Shottery Cottage—though whether he had sufficient powers of comparison and association to class persons so different with himself, and incline to them as strangers also, is doubtful. But the beautiful old French lady had been good to Black Jasper, and he would go and ask her to be good to Massa Rolle and his household in their calamity, and to find something good for them which they might eat and drink, and so break their doleful fast.

Poor Black Jasper in his childish appetites was not so far behind the wisest sons of consolation. Grand'mère was disposed to adopt Black Jasper's view in part. She came from a country where guilds of charity and mercy have long established a right to the sick and the sorrowful, and take possession of them. The country people were good, but they were dull or gross. Grand'mère called them so without invidiousness. They might miss doing something which would soften the hard blow. These poor Rolles, she felt, were too much hurt to bear malice. Grand'mère reflected almost passionately, too, that they should have come to the Dupuys in their good days, and got nothing better from them than mockery and abuse. As to power to work her will, Grand'mère was the most independent lady in the land—she would never have dreamt of asking Monsieur her son's consent to her expedition even had he been at home, though she might have made an appeal to his humanity. As to being compelled to consult and come to one mind with Madame Dupuy, there was not even the necessity of asking her leave to carry Yolande along with her on her mission. The rule of the eldest was supreme at the Shottery Cottage; the patriarchal, or parental form of government dominated there, and power was vested in the senior, and was no more affected by her being an old woman than if the Salic law had been abrogated first of all in France.

"Quick, Yolande!" cried Grand'mère, "my capote and Madame Rougeole. But alas! the little red madame can do nothing here; on second thoughts, I think we will leave her behind; the color might remind them of the poor young man's uniform or of his blood—broken hearts are so ingenious. Now do you comprehend, proud little one, what it would have been for you to have been friends with these poor girls who are brotherless?"

"I am very sorry, Grand'mère," said Yolande penitently. "I do not think I should like other girls to come near me in my sorrow; but then, you know, I am shy, though not patient, as a Huguenot. I should have liked to have been able to help them now. These girls loved their brother, Grand'mère. I once heard them speaking of him when they passed us in our walk—how brave and clever and grand he was, and what he would do for his sisters when he came back a general. I can guess how they hung upon him, and exulted in his uniform, and walked abroad with him in it, the last time he was at home."

"Tell them so, my dear; ask them to describe him; say you never had a brother, but would like to hear of theirs. They will vie with each other in showing what is their loss, and it will relieve their poor hearts."

The rectory, which was usually the trimmest house in the parish, from its china closet to its kitchen-garden, already betrayed symptoms of that extraordinary distress in which the ordinary business of life is arrested and lost sight of. Nobody had any duties left them now that Captain Philip had been killed last year at Ticonderoga. The most sacred precincts of the house had become common ground, always with the reservation of the rector's study, into which he had locked himself. The servants were wandering about everywhere, and doing nothing except contributing to render this day wholly unlike any other day even in its outward symbols of wretchedness.

Grand'mère came, like an interested friend and house-mistress, with the face and voice of restored discipline. Her tact and dispositions speedily and noiselessly removed the overwhelming traces of disaster and dismay, restoring order and harmony without provoking rebellion.

"The son of the house is dead, that is too true, but the clothes must be laid away from the wash, and the mastiff

must have his meal. There will still be clothes to be worn, and you will not stint the dog for the man's loss—or gain. The beast howls, truly, and why? Because he hungers. You need not fear to do your work, my girls, *he* will not be forgotten: and if you wish to remember him particularly, you can still do it on the Day of the Dead, with the living not neglected by you. What! you have no Day of the Dead in England? Then you can remember him with the other blessed departed as you remember on your bed their Lord and yours, in whom they still live, and you can meditate on them in the night watches."

Poor Dorothy and Camilla, unfitted to cope with the grim giant Care, were quite unable to control themselves, left alone as they had been for the first time in their lives. But in their horror and desolation they were sensible that a friend had come to them, and they cast themselves with full hearts on her protection. Grand'mère roused Dorothy from the seat on which she sat shivering as with great cold, and listening, with fixed eyes and curdling blood, to a conclave of the elder servants. For sore sorrow, like sore sickness, breaks down artificial distinctions, and drives some men and women into the company of their fellows, as it drives others into the solitude of the wilderness.

And now each servant mysteriously and fanatically delivered her experience in the matter of corpse-candles, death-spills, death-watches, taking note of what she had observed lately, and comparing it with the result. Dorothy might have learned for all her life afterward to look on death as a dark fate haunting her, hovering over her in her own person and in those of the friends she loved, and from which she could by no means escape, not even by prayer and fasting. She might have learned to look out for it in dim prognostications, to watch for it, and anticipate its cruel blows in incipient madness.

"Our Bibles say we know not the day nor the hour; but He knows—that is enough," said Grand'mère, rebuking the ancient heathen superstition; and she effectually shut the mouths of the seers, at least till Dorothy was out of earshot.

Grand'mère calmed and soothed Camilla, too, and overcame those wild hysterics which were shaking the poor girl's body like a reed in the wind.

But, in the depth of her pity and the height of her reverence, she hesitated to approach the chief sufferers, and almost drew back from them. Though she was acquainted with some passages in the works of the great English poet—in her day little known to French readers—it is not likely she had heard of Constance commanding the kings and princes to stand in her presence because of the supreme majesty of her woe. But she had a fine realization of the sentiment, and it was trembling on her lips, when she at last entered Madam's chamber.

Madam, as she lay there to recover and master herself, had just gasped out an odd wish, “I could desire that Lucy Gage were alive and could come here now. They say she was ever found in the house of mourning, and had acquired the art of drying up tears, that they might not drown the wit and flood the senses, I mean, alack-a-day! what will become of the rector's sermon, and to-morrow is Sunday. Where are Dolly and Milly?—they are not affrighted of me still? Indeed, I must get up, good people, for my head doth swim no longer as if I were seized with the falling sickness. I shall have no need to be bled; there was no call to bleed my boy when his head swam. Oh! Lord! Lord!—shot through the head!—I can see his wet clotted locks at this moment.”

“Madam,” said Grand'mère, “I am not come to comfort you—I dare not. I sit at your feet instead. I have had many afflictions; I am an aged widow now, ending my days in a country not my own. But I have never followed the bier of a dead man, and he my only son. Madam, how much the good Lord must have loved you and yours when He chastened you so much.”

Madam looked up, but closed her eyes again with a low murmur, “Ah! I am a poor creature. Do not tell my husband, he has such heavy trouble, I shrink from such terrible love.”

“More than you, Madam, all men of themselves beat their breasts and lie in the dust to escape it, but still He loves, as sure as the world moves. He does not love us because we love Him, either first or last.”

“And can you believe He loved my Philip when He called him to his account in a moment without warning or preparation?” pleaded Madam, piteously. “He was good, my

son," continued the quiet woman, growing vehement; "he had only a man's ability, and he had a man's falls, but he was honest, dutiful, religious to our knowledge. Still, what do we know? He was in camp in time of war, and we shall never hear if he was ready, and how he met his call."

"Again I say there is One who knows all that, my poor Madam—knows all the young man's faith in His word, all his seeking after Him, all his obedience to his father on earth, and to his commander here, and all the sharpness and suddenness of his mortal end. You trusted our Lord with his life; say, then, will you not trust Him with his death?"

"Then I will, for I must," submitted Madam, meekly; "but French or no French—forgive me for saying it—you are a good old soul to come and put it so to me. I wish Mr. Rolle could hear you."

"And teach me nobler truth, as an ordained servant of our Master—is it not so?" asked Grand'mère. "Ah! Madam, when we have crossed the river and thrown off our rags for His raiment, shall we stop and ask each other whether we are French or English, or—(you shudder, but you can say it, good woman)—American? No, nor even whether we are Protestant or Catholic; but only whether we bear the name of the Cross-bearer who bore our sorrows as well as our sins."

"Mother—yes, I hope you will let me pay you the duty and service I owe you to call you so, for I remember they all called you mother, or grandmother, that day in summer, long ago, when we spoke of him, and I was deceived and believed myself a rich mother still; and he was mouldering under the damp leaves of those great forests he used to tell us of (for he served before in Canada, against your people: you will not mind it now, you are too sorry for us, and too kind);—he was so clever, almost as clever as his father, and the gallantest soldier in the British army; he twice had the thanks of his regiment presented to him, it was writ to his father. He saved a fort from being surprised in the East Indies, and nobody could save him—but I do not blame his comrades; he would not have blamed them, for he loved them as brothers. I am a simple parson's wife, but I thank God I can remember all that. You are old enough to be my mother—no offense, madam—and I shall not forget your coming to us in our sorrow. What

although you—no, not you, but your family—all but shut the door in our faces when we went to see you? I dare say you mistook us, or had some reason for your ill-behavior. I declare you have done a great deal better than show us the most finished politeness. I shall tell Mr. Rolle when he is able to hear it; and he will thank you, and his thanks are worth the having. I shall tell Lady Rolle, our patroness, when she comes down to the Castle, and she may do something for your Spitalfields colony. Now, I am on no ceremony with you, I am going to dismiss you, for I must rise and go to Philip's father."

"But he will not receive you," said the rector, as he walked into his wife's room, "for Philip's father comes to Philip's mother, because the woman is the weaker vessel, and it is for the man to honor and cherish her—that is how I read the text, Madame Dupuy."

He was white and shaken, a man who had aged ten years in a day. He was a little fallen in the face yet when he tried to smile, but his suit was in decent order—possibly his head had been anointed, and his face washed also, and all his resolution and manliness given back to him. He had wrestled for that as well as for resignation, and his Master was no niggard; he had got all he sought.

"No," corrected Madam, "you name the younger, bitter woman; but I do not think any body will be bitter to us again. Philip—ah me! the only Philip I have left!—this is the old dame whom every body called Grand'mère."

"I do not remember; I believe my memory as well as my faith faileth me. Don't contradict me, Millie; the woman's place is to be silent and listen to the man. I think even this old French madame—Madame Dupuy, mère, be it—will not dispute that quite, in precept, whatever she may do in example. I rated my dear son's promotion too low, and that is why my faith failed me, and so I bore a false testimony before my people. I was too low myself, and too worldly-minded, though I am a priest. French priests err in that way too sometimes, do they not, madame? My boy has his promotion, the very highest. He died at his post, and I shall stand at mine. I pray God that He may give me strength to stand at his altar tomorrow, and bear a true testimony in returning thanks for Philip's heavenly promotion. I would have celebrated his

earthly rise in the ale-house, but only God's house is fit when the step is to the skies."

"Monsieur," cried Grand'mère, forgetting her English, and her avoidance of all sectarian allusion at the same time, "you speak nobly, you speak like Jean Calvin himself."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mr. Philip Rolle, with a faint gleam of gratification, "you are too good, you do me too much honor. I do not hold Calvin's tenets, but I respect the man. He was no anarchist, no latitudinarian."

Thus it happened that in the days of bruised and broken hearts there was a truce in the national and sectarian hostilities. A compromise was effected, from which Monsieur and Madame Dupuy simply stood aloof; but Grand'mère was no longer a stranger to the Rolles, Yolande went to the rectory, and was courteously and kindly received by the rector and his wife; Dorothy and Camilla came to the Shottery Cottage, and were tolerated by Monsieur and Madame—borne with, indulged, and indirectly taught by Grand'mère.

About the same time that the news came of the gallant young Captain Philip Rolle's death in a land-fight, there arrived also word of the death of one of Lady Rolle's younger sons, a naval officer, in a sea-fight, in which the renegade Paul Jones had a hand. But, though Sedge Pond had a little pride in having contributed two heroes and martyrs to English history, stirred thereto by the Roman spirit of Mr. Philip Rolle, who would fain have felt himself, and called on others to feel, a stern joy in the noble sacrifice, all that Sedge Pond heard or saw of the Rolle of the Castle's death was the messenger who hurried down to hang up the hatchment on the wall.

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## CHAPTER VII.

SQUIRE GAGE, WHO RODE AND READ—THE YOUNG SQUIRE WHO WALKED BY HIS FATHER'S BRIDLE—THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN.

VISITS, like misfortunes, come not singly. The Dupuys, who had been six months at Sedge Pond without having been waited on by a neighbor, were within a month after

the rector's demonstration required to throw open their doors to a couple of country gentlemen, who had traveled half a day's journey out of their direct road to call upon the French family. They appeared in a guise so strange as to puzzle and confound even Grand'mère's eyes, accustomed though they were to many of the strange sights of that strange time.

"Here be a Bedlamite and his keeper," said Priscille, announcing the strangers. "They have got in at the garden-door, and comed up the path, and now they be a-pounding at the house-door."

The family were thus called in considerable tremor to the lattice-windows. Happily Monsieur was at home this time, and the moment he looked out he dissipated all fears.

"*Oh! ça*, they are harmless. I know them. They are enthusiasts, like some of our own people, and spoken against everywhere, too. You will like to know them, mother; and though you were to offend them to-morrow, and even sin against their fine laws, as so many Englishmen themselves do, they are so enamored of peace, these brave people, that they would not cite you to their courts of justice."

Monsieur had been either misinformed or had made a mistake between the Quakers and Methodists.

"Let them come in, Priscille," he continued.

The chief peculiarities of dress and gait which had struck the Dupuy household were in the elder man. He was stout and middle-aged, with a capacious forehead and violet eyes, in which there was a wonderful mixture of observation and meditation. He had a good composite English nose, a full, flexible mouth, and a double chin, which was yet nowise gross. He wore his own black hair, which hung down on each side of his face till it reached his collarless coat and his cravat, and was abundantly sprinkled with grey, but without any trace of powder. He had on a broad-brimmed hat, like a parson's, but the rest of his dress did not correspond, being of homely, well-worn velveteen—coat, vest, and breeches, the latter with leatheren gaiters. There was not one item of adornment in his costume, neither lace nor braid, shoe-buckle nor cravat-brooch, yet it was unmistakably the costume of a gentleman. Nay, the "grand simple" in style, after which some

of the finest gentlemen of the day had the taste to hanker, did something to bring out the unconscious manly dignity of a figure which was in itself heavy and clumsy; and the perpetual pondering on the highest themes had taken away from the expression of the beautiful eyes what might have been the egotism and coarse rusticity of a self-taught country squire.

The strange gentleman had ridden a grey cob as stout, middle-aged, and apparently as studiously-inclined as himself. As he had ridden, he had read in a large book, with brown calf binding, which lay open across his horse's neck, and ambling along sedately, he had come upon an interesting passage just as he had reached the gate. Priscille's wonderment and scorn had been roused by his sitting stock-still like a statue for a few minutes to finish it before alighting, apparently with the consent of his beast, too, while his companion fastened the horse-bridle in the ring at the garden-door.

The younger man was common-looking in comparison, though he was a comely lad, perhaps a little over twenty, and big and broad-shouldered for his age. One could have seen that he was the old man's son, though he appeared so different, for he had his father's nose, mouth, and chin, along with a square, compact forehead of his own, and eyes inclining more to the steady blue than the changing violet. He was in the dress of his years and station: buckskin breeches, riding-boots, a red vest, and large shining buttons on his coat, while his hat had one of the numerous cocks which in turn was given to that important piece of apparel. But though the younger had all the advantage of dress which the elder wanted—though he had youth and the grace of youth on his side, he nevertheless failed in the special traits which marked the other. His face indicated breeding, fair parts, spirit, sense, modesty, kindliness, and was indeed a singularly fresh, honest, and healthful young face, among the many faces then prematurely wasted and polluted with the hot flush of passion and vice. It was a face, too, in which goodliness seemed to be progressive, like the slow growth of many a bounteous, fruitful tree; but one which, on account of this very slowness, would the more readily recommend itself to English hearts. Still, it was without either the dazzling gleam and glory of genius,

or suggestions of individual and searching experiences, such as excited the curiosity and commanded the interest of every one who looked upon the elder man.

The father and son were journeying together in such cordial good-fellowship as many a parent and child might have envied, though the one was on horseback and the other on foot, and the one studying in unpropitious circumstances a volume of which the other did not care to construe a line now that his school tasks were finished. That other was studying the clouds, the flights of birds, the effects of soils in their growth, the rearing of colts and heifers; and he had not merely a quick eye to what was notable and picturesque in these details, for he had inherited that side of his father's temperament, but had also along with it a practical knowledge, love, and assiduity such as Squire Gage of the Mall, with all his wit, book-lore, and earnestness, had never pretended to.

As Squire Gage passed under the roof of the Shottery Cottage, he raised his hat, and said, so low and solemnly that it seemed a movement of the man's soul, and not a form of words from his lips: "Peace be to this house!" while his companion took off his hat and bowed his head reverently.

"You are welcome, gentlemen," said Monsieur, with his natural urbanity, as he came forward, while the women made their courtesies; "you are welcome the more that I can not for my life tell to what I am to attribute the honor of this visit."

"You are to take it, and our most hearty service, sir," announced Squire Gage, in a deep-toned, full, melodious voice, such as with the early Methodist leaders was a direct personal qualification for their work; "they form a very small acknowledgment of the great debt we owe to a dear friend of ours, and a countryman of yours, who fell asleep too early for his parish, his circuit, England, and Christendom—Fletcher of Madeley. I would fain hope I may hit on some precious memorial of my brother's early friends and his first youth among his Protestant countrymen."

Monsieur taxed his memory in vain. Even Grand'mère could not recall such a one among all the Fléchiers she had known or heard of, even although one of them had been a famous orator, a Fléchier who was a soldier in his youth,

had quitted the army, studied for the Church, emigrated to England, and settled there, and had come forward in the van of the beleaguering host of the Methodists, the beloved friend of its choicest spirits, the truest gentleman, and most faithful servant of his Master, England had ever received into her Church's ranks.

But it did Squire Gage good even to speak of Fletcher of Madeley, and of those rough but brave days when he had known well-born gentlemen, famous scholars, impassioned, meek Christians, lodging in outhouses and barns, without fire or candle, when they trudged along the dangerous roads with their saddle-bags strapped on their backs, brushed each other's shoes and washed each other's potatoes, preached forty hours in a week, and prayed in every house they entered, from five of the clock in the bitter winter mornings till past midnight. Ay, he remembered those days, and loved to think of them too, when they were set upon by bull-dogs, pelted with paving-stones, and drummed out of towns by the public drummer. It did Squire Gage good to speak of the gallant campaign in which he had borne his part, and it warmed his heart to hear the French tongues and to see the French faces. So Fletcher of Madeley had spoken and felt, when he struggled with his consumptive cough to address his people for the last time ; so he had looked when he took off his hat to his pew-opener ; and when he plucked the cushion from his pony-chaise and presented it that the fractured limb of the savage yeoman, who had been his greatest enemy, might rest upon it.

There was a freemasonry between the old Methodist and the old Huguenots, though they differed in many important particulars.

Squire Gage spoke of the rise of Methodism, eagerly but simply. The deeds done had been devoted, gentle, generous deeds, yet there had been nothing wonderful in them save the grace of God vouchsafed by his Son, and reflected faintly in the lives of men whose faces, when they were looked upon by the sympathetic eyes of their generation, seemed as though they had been the faces of angels. Such men were the two great brothers, Mr. John and Mr. Charles Wesley, Fletcher, and Whitfield. For all that, the last Squire Gage had opposed Whitfield, and taken his

stand on the Arminian side of the famous controversy. But our squire had learned the broadest of charity from a broad experience. He had dealt with publicans and sinners of the first water, with Sadducees of all grades, from the heartless negatives of Lord Chesterfield, delivered in Louis Quinze French, and interrupted by incomparable liftings of his hat and takings of snuff, down to the bullying, blustering, blaspheming rodomontade of some Billy Blue, broken in upon by fierce squirts of tobacco-juice and defiant hitches of his trowsers belt. He had encountered Pharisees of every rank and shade, from those whose gain was a bishop's mitre down to squalid, railing men, whose temptation was the miserable three-pounds-a-quarter pitance of the traveling Methodist preacher. He had known, too, Israelites without guile, whose mark had to stand for a signature; and Israelites who burnt their Platos and Livys lest their books should tempt them into intellectual pride, or withdraw them from the narrow way in which alone they could walk, and save their own and their fellow-creatures' souls. And Squire Gage was not like Ignatius Loyola, who vowed himself to the Virgin, and banished women from the roll of his order; for he had known Maries who had washed and mended their rags in order that they might do all things decently; or had laid aside their brocades and pearl drops, and appeared forever afterward in homely calamanco and muslin. He had known some who had set their diamonds in the unplastered walls of primitive chapels, who had given up their cards for hymn-books, and announced their auctions that they might provide houses of refuge for the poverty-stricken, the sick, and the sinful. Squire Gage had made many such friends in the dens of great cities, in the wilds of America, on shipboard, and at Moorfields.

The squire's nature was so liberal, generous, and finely attuned to sympathy, that he made little of his own claims and much of his neighbors', and so he addressed the Duyps with a deferential wave of the hand and a manly apology for taking up the time of the interview. "I am advised not to detain you farther with my poor personal narratives; an elderly man waxes both heavy and garrulous, and therefore Mr. John warned his preachers not to suffer the devil to tempt them into long sermons. But

may I beg the favor of a few fresh particulars of your honorable history? Indeed, I am credibly informed that you have been most blessed martyrs."

"Yes, indeed, martyrs *par-ci* and martyrs *par-là*; but I leave the question of the martyrs," declared Monsieur, indifferently. "I say we have been honest men stripped of our rights and privileges, and brutally pillaged and outraged, and that if we pay our enemies back in their own money, they have worked for their wages—that is all."

"That is to leave the question of the martyrs, sure enough," answered Squire Gage, gravely; "for martyrs, and for that matter, brave, true patriots, do not avenge themselves. My dear sir, I pray you think better of it."

"Ta, ta, ta, my dear Monsieur Gage; it is my own business."

"I deny that," asserted the squire, eagerly; "I deny that any man's business is his own if it be likely to injure or ruin him, and if it is granted that he is one of many brethren."

"Say it to him, Monsieur," adjured Madame Dupuy, "when the cats run on the roof the mice dance on the planks. Ah well! yes, the famine drives the wolves out of the forest. My husband will ask permission to blow his nose on the one hand, and he will persist in following his worldly, reckless courses on the other. All men are Demases in these degenerate days."

"Madam!" responded Squire Gage, turning round in mild astonishment and deprecation upon the narrow, dark face, with the rage of the contest forever burning fiercely in it; and, true to his Methodist principles, he rebuked the error. "I also am a man, and I have yet to learn that these days in which we live are degenerate days. I fancy they are a mighty deal better than those in which Mary burnt the bishops, or Elizabeth fined the Puritans, or Anne thought of bringing back the Pope and the Pretender, or your Charles and Catherine massacred your fathers, or your Louis sold them as slaves; only I conclude there has been some good in all events and at all times, else God would not have suffered them, any more than the world. Moreover, I have read, both in the law and the Gospel, that the man is the head of his house; therefore, even although the head were as far wrong as you say, I see not

that the tail would have any call to rise up and lash its own natural sovereign."

"But they tell me that your sect allows the public ministry of women?" questioned Grand'mère, partly to provide for the subsiding of any offense which might have arisen from the plain-speaking of Mr. Gage. Such plain-speaking was but small offense to her, when there was nothing in it of the "stand aside, I am holier than thou." At the same time, Grand'mère had a vehement prejudice against the public ministry of women. Like other French-women whose social influence was immense, she was inclined to hold in aversion every independent influence exerted by women.

"Yes, my dear old dame," confirmed the squire, bending gladly to the benign foreign face which was least strange to him, since it reminded him most of the face of Fletcher of Madeley; "and we are minded to say, though it is not a gallant saying, that if an ass rebuked Balaam, and a cock rebuked Peter, surely a woman may rebuke sin."

"Certes! that is not putting the similes too high," acknowledged Grand'mère, with her silvery laugh; "still, you see, I have heard of a certain epistle called Corinthians, and in the epistle premier there is a certain chapter numero XIV., verses 34 and 35, where we read something on the preaching and the teaching of women; now, what of that, sir?"

"We opine, madam, that the verses refer to church government and discipline, and we ordain not, nor do our women presume that they should settle the disputes in our conferences, or control the management of our circuits. But to what purpose have you women your tender logic of the heart, compared with which ours is so tough and dry? For the use of your husbands and children only? Why, that is selfish at the best. And what if your husbands and children do not want it? What if you have neither husbands nor children? You will confess that Deborah, and not Lapidoth, judged Israel, and Anna spoke of the child to all who looked for his coming. That was before the days of the great Apostle Paul, I grant you; but methinks he would not have shut the mouths of those women. When I was so happy, and my dame so

much less happy than she is now, in that she still abode with me, I used to find that when I spoke to a crowd of fellow-sinners, more by token when they were poor, work-worn, dull, or distraught men and women, and I was apt to fly far over their heads, my good woman never came after me but she went straight to their hearts. Ah ! I wish you could have heard her. If you had done so, you would never have controverted women speaking in the cause of their Lord again. She had Chrysostom's golden mouth, and could lull and disarm the most raging opposition of the natural man, could overcome the most tormenting, gnawing worldly care, and turn the sneer of the profane into the worship of the devout, and melt even a heart of stone ! This her son, who is not one of our preachers, having no gift that way, and who, like you, doth not much affect the ministry of women, can tell you what her preaching was like ; and I will say for him, that he is too sterling a lad to overpraise beyond his judgment even the good mother that bore him."

Thus appealed to, the young man spoke, without hesitation and reluctance, and, as it seemed, without favor. "It is true what my father says. My mother's sermons were most sweet and suitable. I have known few weary of her discourse, and few who were not the better for it. Other women appear to me to wax weak and distempered, and to utter frothy matter, or to repeat themselves ; but my mother was more reasonable, collected, and concise, as well as more earnest, genuine, and heavenly-minded, when she was carried away with her theme, than any speaker I have ever heard ; unless it be one whom truth and not flattery compels me to except—yourself, sir, in your happy moments ; for you know I have not lived long enough to have ever heard Mr. John Wesley, or Fletcher, or Whitfield, or any of those you term our Boanerges."

"No, boy. But I fall far short of your mother ; I come not near her, though I have had so many more years of grace given me, and so many more years of the practice of preaching, and though you, being her boy as well as mine, and spoiled by her in that respect, wise as she was, are too prone to exalt me."

"And yet, with two such qualified progenitors, you do not attempt the public speaking yourself, my young sir,"

speculated Monsieur, a little mockingly; “ ‘tis a rare continence.”

“ I am not fit for it,” declared the young squire, with a straightforwardness which wholly disarmed superciliousness; “ I do not wear the Methodists’ dress because it would be hypocrisy in me, who have not come out of the world as they have done, nor, indeed, am persuaded that their peculiar separation from the world ought to be mine also. I am good for nothing but to take care of my father’s beast when he forgets that he carries a student and a preacher, and is like to stumble and throw his rider; or to knock down any man who lays a rough hand on a godly, beneficent man, be he a squire like my father, or a poor journeyman shoe-maker, a brother of St. Crispin, as my father calleth him, which so many of our traveling preachers are—whether there be Methodism in the smell of the leather, or any other provoking cause, I wot not.”

“ My lad, let not the devil cause thee to bear false witness, even though it be in decrying thyself. Thou art eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, for my eyes were never good for much but poring over brown books, or peering closely into men’s faces, or scanning far off the vague vast of the sky; and my feet hath my father’s old punishment of gout in them.”

“ Though you gave up tea and coffee as too stimulating and pampering, along with my mother and Mr. John Wesley, a score of years agone,” commented the son.

“ And you profess to keep the farming of the old Mall within bounds, when you pretend that the agriculture of Virgil is wrong?”

“ So it is, sir,” argued the young squire; “ when you apply what was written for Northern Italy, under the Romans, to Midland England under the house of Brunswick.”

“ Do you not read Virgil also, my young sir?” inquired Grand’mère, inquisitively.

“ No, madam, I am too thick of the head, and have too much to occupy and divert me at present. Perhaps I shall turn to it when my brains have grown with use, or when other trades fail; when I am disabled for the active duties and diversions for which I am persuaded I am designed at present, which my father doth not forbid, and in which I do not see any harm.”

"Yea; let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," murmured Caleb Gage the elder, "for there are divers operations, but the same Spirit."

In the mean time young Caleb Gage had been trying to make himself agreeable to the Dupuys, and to improve the acquaintance of Yolande Dupuy, just as he would have done with a companion of his sisters, had he had sisters. He had tried it in various ways, and had at last retired foiled from the effort. He had got, in reply to his queries, which should have interested any ordinary young girl, the briefest monosyllables. Whether she liked Sedge Pond and its neighborhood?—Whether she had been in the Castle Gardens?—Whether she were given to the rearing and teaching of tame birds, as he had heard tell French women were, and in that case whether she would care to have birds snared for her? or whether she were minded to have the pond dredged? These, and such as these, were the questions with which Caleb Gage plied Yolande unsuccessfully. But he was left utterly uncertain whether Ma'mselle was a stone statue of a proper young gentlewoman, as she sat there in her silk sack and her great bow of rose ribbon on her cap, a tinge of rose coming into her white cheeks for a second, and then leaving them again, just to show that she was really living flesh, and not dead marble; or whether in her superior learning she scorned him.

The truth was that Yolande, as Grand'mère had seen, was more ignorant of the world, more strange to its ways, and more at a loss what to say and do than any girl just out of her convent. She had hardly seen or spoken to any man save her father's associates in trade, who had not treated her as an equal, but as a child. She was certainly glad enough that any body should think so kindly of them as to visit them. But she did not know what to make of the young squire's rank freedom; and could not tell whether it was right for him to address her as he did, or whether he would presume to address Dorothy and Camilla Rolle with such ease, and whether they would suffer it.

The visitors were invited to share in a meal with the inmates of the Cottage, and this invitation they accepted with polite alacrity, and without any objections, save that Squire Gage quietly declined to drink healths, saying that he had prayed for the company already, and would pray for

and with them again whenever they liked, but that neither he nor any other Methodist would pledge a bumper, any more than they would pour out a libation. Shortly after the meal was over, father and son took their departure.

The Gages had inspired a sentiment in the inmates of the Cottage more akin to good-will than the Rolles had been able to do on first acquaintance. Grand'mère was especially pleased with them, and was not guiltless of forming her own projects and building her own castles in the air, even on so short an acquaintance—projects in which the Gages, father and son, figured largely.

"Grand'mère," interrupted Yolande, "did you observe Mr. Gage's eyes, which are short-sighted? They are like nothing but the evening star when the dew is falling."

"Yes, little one, and I have seen eyes like them in the long past; eyes with a short sight for the present, and a far sight for the future. No marvel that they are both unfathomable and effulgent, for they have done as great things as the Italian who went down into the Inferno—they have looked into eternity, these eyes, and it is reflected in their glance."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### GRAND'MÈRE TURNS MISER—AN EMBASSY TO THE MALL— SORTES BIBLICÆ.

GRAND'MÈRE, with all her inward peace, had a care on her mind, the more imperative that it was tender. But after the Gages had introduced themselves at the Shottery Cottage, she did not so much shake off the care as find that the solution of the problem took a tangible shape, and became to her sanguine temper and ardent imagination more and more practicable and probable.

Then Grand'mère sought with some formality a special interview with Monsieur, her son, and communicated her intentions to him.

Monsieur laughed a little, even at his mother, in this case, for Grand'mère's care bulked so slightly in his mind, that it appeared a very bagatelle, weighed in the scale against his obligations. But he admitted there was some

foundation for her concern, and he gave his mother *carte blanche* to do what she could to remove the cause.

“I leave it to you, *ma mère*; it is your affair. I believe these are honest people, and the *liaison* may be agreeable to them (since there is no inequality of fortune, when they have wasted the better part of their patrimony on alms-deeds) for the sake of you, little mother, and their hero—this Monsieur, I do not know who—Fléchier. As to the *tourterelle*, she may do as well with them as with others. She abuses the English, that poor child; but she has not even the *débonnaireté* of these *drôles* the pastor’s daughters. Psch! Yolande’s blood is cold, and her color grey, like the English climate and sky, which I do not abuse; she has the spleen, the unfortunate! the English form of the excellent mother’s faith—*tristesse*, chagrin. Is it not true, my mother?”

“All the waters run to the river my son,” replied Grand’mère, with a shade of impatience and indignation. “Whom should the child resemble unless her near relations? But she is a good child, a noble child, word of mine, Hubert. There are men and women who know their kind, that would give more for the truth, and for the earnestness, all sombre as yet, of our Yolande, than for the light, treacherous frivolity, and the natures all egotism and all passion, of the girls of the world.”

“*Ouais!* She is severe. I have never heard her called so before. The nursling is very near thy heart, Grand’mère.”

“Because you have a diamond, and you do not know it, papa Dupuy. You embark what remains of your good head and heart in ventures and schemes alone. The good Philippine is not altogether wrong. Yet you have bread, and *fripe* also, already. You are better off than most of our *émigrés*, and you can not even spare time to get a glimpse of your diamond, though you are aware that it is the pure and precious diamond, which is rough and dark in the mine, till it is brought to the light and cut, ready to be set in the crown of a king.”

“I have had a diamond all my days, my old woman, cut and polishe dbefore I ever looked upon it; and it is not true that I have not noticed it, and valued it, when it alone had sent radiance into the dark places thousands of

times. But I am too old, too *bourgeois*, and have yet too many rivals to overcome in trade, which is my calling, to want another diamond, or to cut it off for myself; and you women, born *religieuses*, will not understand such things. I shall take it on trust, if you please, and I shall leave you to dispose of it, to bestow it to shine (poor little diamond! the sun to it, with all my heart) in another house, and show myself the son of my mother in this liberality—and I can not help that defect altogether, since I happen to be one of the rude, hard, worldly *bêtes* of men whom poor Philippine rails at. Go! let her rail, if it does her good, what does it signify?"

Grand'mère bade Yolande go and aid big Priscille, as she wished to speak with her mother; and she consulted Madame so soon as Monsieur had retired to his study, or rather his business-room.

And Madame said she did not love the English; she did not trust them; she would rather see the mortal remains of Yolande in English earth than that the immortal spirit of the child should forget and forsake the faith of the French soil, for which her ancestors had watered the land with their best blood. As to Lutheranism, it was a *tantamarre* of Protestantism; Methodism might be better but she did not like the tree on which the fruit grew. At the same time, it was true that a girl could not be left alone to face the dangers and the temptations of the world. There were no French parents who would not seek in good time the protection of another's house and home for a young maiden. Monsieur would bring them all to the Bastille of England, or to the horse-pond, some day. Ah! she begged Grand'mère's pardon for speaking disrespectfully of her son. She had forgotten for the moment that her husband was Grand'mère's son, and *petite mère* should not go to the Bastille. She was too venerable, too near the saints. *Petite mère* should go with Yolande. Monsieur would not allow it otherwise, and she would not allow it; for it would be undutiful and unkind to the dear old mother. No, she alone would accompany Monsieur, and perhaps the sooner the better, if it brought him to a right mind, to faith and repentance.

"My Philippine, thou art honorable and devout to the finger-tips; but thou art not a trooper. No! thou art

weak as water, with the throes of passion, like many another poor woman, my child. If thou wouldst only have faith in the good God, and fervent charity toward men," adjured Grand'mère, with commiseration. "But nevertheless chagrin is in the humors of the blood, my love, I believe it well; and we when judge harshly, very often we should do better to have great pity."

Madame would have infinitely preferred to transplant Yolande into a French household, but at Sedge Pond the Dupuys were isolated from their countrymen, save in the case of those business men whom Madame looked upon as denaturalized renegades, the accomplices of Monsieur's Mammon-worship and plotting ambition. Then there was just enough of the *bourgeoise* in Madame to be sensible of the disadvantage of having bread without *fripe*, as was true of the mass of the Huguenot *émigrés*, and the consequent temptation when bread and *fripe* were offered to them to lick the *fripe* on their own account, and, so far as faithful regard and abiding friendship were concerned, leave the bread to take its own chance, and to be trampled under foot in the crowd of other relations and interests. Thus while Madame groaned in spirit, as she did over most proposals which were made to her, she saw no reason for treating what had the great weight of Grand'mère's wish as rank apostasy and villainy.

Thus Grand'mère, in her sweet cracked voice, began to sing, over her cooking, distilling, lace-weaving, not Clement Marot's psalms alone, though she sang them oftenest and with most satisfaction, but old ballads and folk-songs, which were like drops of the nation's heart, that she had never despised and never forgotten, and which now came to her, in green, misty England, with touches of the varied colors and wafts of the sweet odors of the south.

Grand'mère also suddenly developed a passion for coins, especially for gold pieces—canary birds as she called them. She was evidently making a collection of them, and hoarding as many sovereigns as she could come by. When Yolande sought the reason of this, Grand'mère put her off with the pleasantry that she was becoming avaricious in her old age, and was scraping together a "little fortune to leave Yolande an heiress."

But Grand'mère made a bad miser, for Priscille came in

and told her a sad story of a poor spendthrift prodigal gentleman, a stranger, who had come with his wife, a forlorn fine lady, and hidden their heads from the shame of witnessing an execution in their own house, under the roof of the ale-house of Sedge Pond. Théy were not able to go any farther, or try any new mode of life, because they had not the money to pay for their entertainment, and they were now in such a strait that the gentleman had threatened to hang or drown himself. Then Grand'mère stole secretly out, with the help of Madame Rougeole, solicited the honor of being allowed to wait on the couple, and proposed, in a roundabout, ingenious way, to offer them a little loan, as if it were an agreeable scheme of putting out at interest a portion of her thousands of spare francs and crowns. On the strength of this loan she was privileged to see the helpless couple go away in the coach, to throw themselves on the much-tried mercy of such older, wiser, and better supplied friends as might be left to them, but with small prospect to Grand'mère of ever seeing her canary birds again.

Grand'mère's indemnification was the half-affronted recollection of how the theatrical, fine gentleman, with his unpowdered hair hanging like candle-wicks over his face, and his velvet coat stained and soiled, had wished to kneel to her, and she had quickly prevented him:

“No, sir, kneel to your God.”

And when he had stared, looked foolish, and shrugged his shoulders, she had been compelled to cry—

“Do you not know Him? Have you never kneeled to Him? What marvel that every thing has gone wrong with you, even till you have come to perish with hunger?”

Afterward the fellow had insisted on kissing Grand'mère's hand, and vowed that as she had done more for him than all his friends among the quality, for her sake he would never bet, or game, or race, or swear more, strike him dead if he would.

And Grand'mère stopped her ears, put her hand on his bold mouth, and cried dolefully to the prodigal, who was not yet five-and-twenty—

“If thou canst not keep thyself from sin for God's sake and thine own, how thinkest thou that thou canst have strength to do it for the sake of an old Huguenot? Nay,

leave off these big promises, and look to thy wife, whom thou hast taught to game and bet as furiously as thyself. Behold the cards and spadille hidden in thy cuff, as if that were thy chief care and the work for thy last moments; and I heard her wagering the lace of her cap against the braid of your coat that I was the hostess come to crave you again, as I mounted the stairs. She is frightened to contradict you, I see it in her eyes, but she shrinks from starvation and infamy, and from lawless violence. Oh! do you not, my *pauvrette*? Then go, my *mirlifore* of a debtor, and promise to me not at all, but perform a little to save that lost child whom thou hast helped to drag to the brink of the precipice. Yet, not even for her, no, not even for her, wilt thou pause and think, and play the man until it is too late, unless thou canst arise and go to thy Father."

The sinner went at last, his head hanging a little. It was exceedingly doubtful, however, whether, unless in the exhaustless hopefulness of Grand'mère, he would not be sneering at her before he had turned the corner. "But what of that?" Grand'mère would have asked. "Behold the dark silent night, when he may think better of it. Behold the moments of trial, anguish, terror, alas! alas! coming thick and fast on such as he, when, while there is still mercy for him, he may recall even so poor a lesson."

Grand'mère returned to the Shottery Cottage, and looked a little ruefully at her empty purse, the canaries all fled from it. Eventually she consoled herself with the simple reflection that money was one thing, and men and women another; and that failing the gold there was always the copper, which was only a metal a little redder in color and heavier in weight. If Yolande could not have a dozen louis in her pocket one day, she might have a dozen of dozen of sous, which would be a great deal grander in point of number, for the sake of her dear old France and its discreet, economical country customs.

Yolande, girl as she was, had her thoughts and suspicions in the middle of her constant questioning, pondering, and disputing; but they were single-hearted, submissive, and child-like. And when the crisis arrived for Grand'mère to make known her intention of going alone on an expedition to the Mall, to return the visit of Squire Gage,

Yolande cast down her eyes, shrank a little more into herself, looked colder and graver in tone, and more nervous and timid, a new phase of her quietness and gravity; but she did not dream of so much as suggesting opposition to Grand'mère's enterprise. There would have been indelicacy and insubordination, even according to Grand'mère's standard, in such a step on Yolande's part.

Grand'mère had had so few opportunities of visiting, and had so seldom availed herself of them for many years, that she declared it made her old head light, when she started on one of the rector's horses, which was borrowed for the occasion. Madame Rolle had offered the use of her chariot, but Grand'mère had that honorable pride which would have nothing to do with what was out of keeping with her real position. She was an old *bourgeoise* Huguenot; her pride, so far as it was permissible, lay in that distinction. She did not care to be rolling, or rather bumping heavily along the bad roads, like the quality. She accepted the attendance of Black Jasper, however, because she wanted a man to walk by her horse. She thought it would be a mutual advantage, and a kind of treat to the poor fellow, who wore a bit of crape for Captain Philip round his arm soldier-wise, which he had begged one of the rectory still-maids to sew on for him; and he never passed the rector without trying to cover it clumsily with his hand, or his hat, or his napkin, as if that would cover a father's grief. He never glanced at it himself without his rolling eyes getting dim. But if Grand'mère was as elated as a child at her new circumstances, she had a child's generosity in seeking to share them with her neighbors. She desired to do Priscille's business and the business of every other house-wife who would trust her, at the wheel-wright's and the miller's on the road. She sat equipped for starting full ten minutes, to allow Black Jasper to enjoy the spectacle of a man and an ape performing before the ale-house porch.

At last Grand'mère set out to ride her six miles and back. On she went by the Waäste, past an occasional windmill, which struck her as being the likest feature to France in the landscape; on by another rural village much in the style of Sedge Pond. She passed farm-houses, confused masses of out-buildings, only a little less sluttish than the villages, forsaken by their occupants for the harvest-

work in the fields. She got gleams of the great white stuccoed arcade of the Rolles' castle, which carried the rampant imagination of Grand'mère to the Louvre at the least. And always journeying with her there was the same slow, sleepy river, like a canal, bearing a barge or two, bound for Norwich.

Grand'mère and Black Jasper traveled in the greatest harmony. They were not without annoyances, however. The children of the strange village, who had never seen a black servant before, but who had, nevertheless, arrived at the conclusion that his name was Black-a-more, came out and stared, pointed their fingers, screamed, and mocked at Black Jasper, who was naturally oppressed by these attentions; and the little gall that was in him being roused, he made faces, and threatened the small fry in hurried, impressive pantomime.

“Seest thou not, my son, that it is of no use? Thou attractest them only the more. Heed them not. If they did not stare and shout at thee, they would stare and shout at me—at my French tongue, at the fashion of my grey hair, and the cut of my mantua.”

Black Jasper ruminated on the beautiful old lady's calling him her son, and comparing him to herself; and became so inflated with conceit, that the next time he was assailed by his too ardent admirers, he raised his cocked hat, made a low bow, and then spreading out his sable fingers on his white shirt, saluted their tips till the children cried, “Boo! boo! lulliberoo!” more loudly and frantically than ever, and Grand'mère, it must be confessed, was slightly scandalized at her train.

The Mall was a square building of red brick with white facings, like a soldier's uniform of scarlet cloth and pipe-clay. It had not only done good private service in its day—had not only held in its oak and cedar parlors whole generations of the Gages from the reign of Anne, and had hidden priests of all denominations in the hole behind the chimney of the dining-hall, which was a fragment of an older building—but it had seen public service lately. It was an old seat in the modest rank of English country mansions, and it was a Methodist establishment, combining college (on the principle of Kingswood), orphanage, hospice for belated travelers, hospital for the helpless sick, and

house of refuge for the homeless poor. All its buildings and pleasure-grounds, which were not absolutely required in the economy of its large household, were transformed from their original aims, and pressed into the use of a motley regiment. The hall was a meeting-house and class-room, where preachers and teachers lectured and taught; the stable was almost stripped of its stalls, while the loft above was fitted up into humble dormitories. The coach-house was the hospital, and an old berline which still stood in a corner served as the refractory ward for an occasional violent patient. The kennels were workshops, in which traveling tailors, shoe-makers, and basket-makers made periodical sojourns, and found apprentices ready to their hands; while a company of young girls was distributed, under capable, vigilant matrons, over the kitchen, the wash-house, the bake-house, the dairy, and the housekeeper's room. In addition to the Methodist preachers, in every degree of training, whom Squire Gage housed, fed, clad, sent out and followed with never-failing interest into their circuits of evangelization, the Mall was well stocked with poor relations, who chose to make it their head-quarters on the right of charity's beginning at home. The only stipulation with them was that they should attend the exercises, comply with the regulations of the house, and conduct themselves with propriety while they were under its roof. Along with the regular pensioners Squire Gage took in an irregular band. Any number of chance wayfarers, who preferred a dish of groats and a crust with a grace said to it, clean straw, and the shelter of a roof, to the highway, a grudging shed, and the pence demanded for the humblest supper and bed at the ale-house, were also taken in at the Mall and made welcome.

Thus Grand'mère did not find the country house, basking sluggishly in the afternoon sun, solitary, save for its two masters and their domestics; on the contrary, it overflowed with life in all ranks and at all stages. From a wagon before the porch, two little boys, in corduroys and knee-breeches, were just alighting. They had rusty bands of crape round their bonnets, and were very thin-faced and watery-eyed—a consignment a brother Methodist in the next large town had sent to fill up two vacancies in Brother Gage's orphanage. There was a figure wrapped in a blan-

ket, and taken straight to the hospital, as like to be a patient in small-pox as any thing else. There was a halt man in a frieze coat; a blind woman in a duffle cloak, with the hood drawn over her head; and a scarecrow of an old gentlewoman, in a gipsy bonnet and a *roquelaure*, claiming remote kindred with Squire Gage, and cumbered with so many trunks and bandboxes that she certainly meant to push her claim to the extent of spending the remainder of her days at the Mall, while she looked sourly at the halt and the blind, as if dreading that there might not be bread enough and to spare for her and for them. There were all imaginable noises, the sound of planes, saws, resined strings, and voices from the workshop.

Elderly women and half-grown girls, precise, and only curbed in their sauciness, were moving to and fro in the porch, at the windows of the house, and on the landing-places of the outside stairs, engaged in scouring, mending, preparing meals, attending to the dumb animals, and waiting on those who could not wait on themselves. A beggar was examining his wallet; a hawker sorting his stock of ballads; an old soldier was airing his patched and faded uniform, a scar on his wrinkled forehead. But each was at his ease, and exhibited an inclination to growl at and grudge elbow-room to his neighbor in the ivied court. Itinerant preachers, in the elevation of their calling, were studying, by the help of books and papers, apart from the throng, or discussing together for the most part doctrines, creeds, and experiences, sometimes with a war of words rising, ebbing, raging, falling. Students and disputants paced up and down, and rested in the walks, arbors, and summer-houses of what had once been the gardens in which the ladies of the Mall had taken delight, while the men had rejoiced in their hunters and harriers, their hunting breakfasts and coursing dinners. The late Dame Gage, though she had loved flowers with the best flower-lovers among her predecessors, had voluntarily and cheerfully given over her garden to pass into the commonest of kitchen and of physic gardens, for the behoof of the great family at the Mall. Only here and there, a tiger-lily or a nectarine yet struggled into stately gorgeous flower or luscious fruit, like plants of another age and region, among coarse beans and cabbages, chamomiles and hoarhound, gnarled crabs and

plums. And Grand'mère hailed a huge walnut-tree, which continued to shade one corner; and she hung over the straggling tendrils and leaves of a wilding vine, for it was such as she had known grow trim and fair and fruitful in hundreds of tender green, olive, and straw-colored saplings in her vineyard in Languedoc.

She looked round without misgiving, and with sympathetic interest in the extraordinary colony. When Squire Gage was apprised of her arrival, he hastened to welcome her with the warmest cordiality, and received her with the greatest honor. He, however, had no other apartment to which to conduct her, save the kitchen and parlor in one, where elm-wood dresser, birch-wood settles, cherry-wood cupboards, pewter flagons, box-wood bowls, and dishes of coarsest earthenware, did duty for fine furniture, and which was the only company-room left at the Mall. Grand'mère looked round her with more than perfect acquiescence—with glad approval. She trod like a queen on a progress, when Mr. Gage led her, after she had rested, over his wonderful human laboratory. She went with him into what he called the *academicia*, into the porticoes, the hall, and the garden, and heard him help aspiring boys, sons of poor Nonconformist ministers and school-masters, to construe Sallust and solve Euclid, as they had begun to do in the intervals of “lashing” out the corn on the shell-ing hill, and walking in the furrow of the plough at their homes. She saw him pull the locks of others, and bid them not smuggle away their “Seven Champions” and “Robinson Crusoes,” for his good brother Adam Clarke had demonstrated beyond contradiction that from nursery fairy-tales and school-boy legends he had learnt what had served to help his faith in the invisible, and to teach him to endure hardness as a good soldier of the greatest and best of Lords. He took Grand'mère from workshop to hospital, charming her by his unconscious power of wisdom and love in their management; and she delighted him by disarming the hostility of the crowd of performers whom his hand—practiced in blessing—ruled harmoniously, but who were liable to prove unruly and contentious under any other leader, and to resent keenly the suspicion of an interloper. But Grand'mère praised right and left in all good-will, first frankly acknowledging the merits of sor-

rel salve and elderberry wine, of goose pie and blackberry pudding, and then she presented a box of French unguent for wounds and bruises, and a case of cassia; finally she begged a saucepan, six beaten eggs, six bits of butter the size of a nut (telling them the French cook's proverb was, "Spare neither butter nor care"), a little shredded basil and thyme, and a little grated ham, a pinch of pepper and salt, and tossed in a trice before their eyes that "*omelette aux fines herbes*," the very naming of which is sufficient to improvise an appetite in the sickliest of convalescents.

But there were other relics of the original gentle estate and destination of the Mall, beyond its stone and wood work. The principal of these were the books of its master's library, in the ancient dignity of vellum and calf-skin, still stored in book-cases at one end of the kitchen; and the family pictures, which yet looked strangely down, in the pink of proud and affected attitudes and attire, from a high whitewashed open gallery running round the room, on the bustle below.

Squire Gage explained that he had once entertained serious thoughts of burning his books, as the hearers of the Apostle Paul did theirs; or at least, of selling them like other luxuries, for what money they would bring into the treasury of the establishment. But then, again, he had considered that his old friends and faithful companions contained no magical arts, and he had spared them, as he was thankful for afterward. The longer he lived, the more fully he was assured that a man should be thoroughly furnished to every good work, and that there was no furnishing, after the inspiration of the Spirit and the teaching of Holy Scripture, which was to be compared with the clouded, corrupted wisdom of the ancients, so that a man's eye was purged to see through the dimness of their vision. And if a man's eye remained without light, why then both the wisdom and the folly of the ancients and them oderns would be all one to him in his darkness. His lad, indeed, did not at present affect the classics, nor yet, save in a modified degree, the English authors themselves. But what of that?—one man's meat was another man's poison; there were other lads to whom he could lay open his library, and to whom Caleb would never grudge the beauty and the wealth of his father's grand old books.

As to the pictures, there were brethren who remonstrated with Squire Gage for keeping them in their bare canvas, in the manner in which they had hung since his dame freed them from their frames, which she had dispatched, along with what plate, tapestry, ebony, ivory, silk and fine linen there had been at the Mall, to be disposed of in London, to help the funds for the systematic relief of one small fraction of the poor and needy. These strict brethren were apprehensive lest the poor painted faces, love-locks, top-knots, sword-hilts and citherns should serve to produce pride of birth and race in their possessor. But though the squire protested gravely that he did not think it was asked of him, or of any man, to sit in judgment on the sins of his forefathers, and "improve" them, he was of opinion that there was as much humility as pride to be got from the honest study of those lingering shadows on the wall. And the squire, as he spoke, glanced at a truculent old Gage who had done great execution in the Civil Wars, and a vain, light woman who had wedded and abandoned him.

"But tell me, my Monsieur," asked Grand'mère, thoughtfully, as she inspected his labors, "will this gracious house last? Is it that you have founded it in perpetuity, or that the benevolent will keep it up by a succession of donations and dedications, as in the French houses of charity and mercy? Pardon me, Monsieur, that I am a Lot's wife of doubt and distrust, and fear that the Mall house may be abused like other houses in other hands, and in other generations. How will you guard and fence it when even the brave young Monsieur is done with carrying out his father's intentions?"

Squire Gage smiled gently, and shook his head. "It is one good of imperfection, madam, that it wants not fencing and guarding. And that this poor scheme of mine is imperfect, I and my dame knew from the beginning. But what would you have? There was a crying need for some reformation, some commencement of a good work. We made our trial, and did our best—for our day. My dear madam, a future day is not mine, and I am not called upon to provide for it, or meddle with it. No, I shall not bequeath the rents which may yet come in to me to Gage's Hospital. Why should I? God has raised a natural bar-

rier. My lad is as much a messenger from Him, and the messenger who comes first and nearest to me, as my poorest fellow-creature."

"And Monsieur Caleb, will he not wash the disciples' feet also?"

"Not in his father's and mother's way. Why should he? There is no call upon him to walk in their footsteps. He may go his own way. Any other conclusion savoreth of an automaton and a martinet, since my son is not of the stuff which hypocrites are made of. No, he may go his own way, so that he follow in Another's footsteps; and how far and wide they diverge, on how many soils, by how many paths, blessed be God, do these divinely human footsteps travel! I go thus far, that I have not, in my opinion, made Caleb a poorer man in the long run, because I have spent the savings of my minority, besides some furnishings and personal belongings, and sold a farm or two, which might have fallen to him. He will have enough for a gentleman farmer. He may take in land, rear stock, buy and sell, build up the house anew, extend its borders, for he is shrewd and prudent, and skillful in business, as well as generous and modest. He may break up the Waäste, drain the Mall Deep, cut down the old coppice, erect wool-mills and corn-mills just as the first Gage of the Mall drew the first furrow between this and Sedge Pond. It is in the kind, and in the sample, and thence we have been distinguished as namesakes of the son of Jephunneh, who had the hill-country of Hebron for his portion, and the expulsion of the sons of Anak for his reward. Nay, but forgive this foolish boasting; it is an old man's garrulity. Caleb will not continue the establishment; but I have confidence in my son that he will let it go down slowly and gently, and that he will not be minded to turn the last of its inmates adrift; not though he were the most troublesome and ingrained black sheep. He will honor the Methodist body that far, and none the less esteem it that he hath never belonged to it; and he will not be in any haste to remove his father and mother's landmarks."

"It is true, my friend," replied Grand'mère, "that there are Christians, and Christians; and I confess it does seem to me that the early Christians selling their land, laying the money at the Apostles' feet, and having all their goods

in common, reads like practices designed for the exigencies of their country and age, not as a pattern for all time."

"Without doubt, my dear madam; and young eyes see flaws in goodly robes which their predecessors wore with exultation and thankfulness. Why not? What were the clearness and sunshine of the present given them for, if not to correct what is cumbrous and obsolete, unfit and misshapen in the cloak or gown, though it served its turn in days gone by, when no fault was seen in it and it sheltered its wearer from the mists and storms of the winter of the past. I have always thought it one of the inconsistencies and eccentricities of your Michel de Montaigne that he would go abroad in his father's old cloak because it was his father's. Caleb doth not choose to vex me, but I know he thinks my large family can not last long (inasmuch as it is an arbitrary institution, and not God's ordinance of blood and kindred), when there is no supreme necessity for it, without breeding and fostering jealousies, strife, and violence, as in the religious houses of all sects, after a lapse of time. The boy hath had before now to help me to put down differences and divisions, even between preachers and teachers, with a high hand, and once we had to call in the civil power against a poor rogue of a tinker who had reminded me of a certain illustrious dreamer, but who was unlike John Bunyan in this respect, that he was so left to himself as to take all he could get and give the worst word on his entertainment, annoy and insult his fellow-lodgers, and drive them from receiving profit from the exercises. At last he sunk to the low pitch of lustng after the very homely trenchers and porringers out of which he had eaten his meals, and of secreting them with the purpose of removing them. My good dame, he struck and kicked the man who detected him in his iniquity so forcibly, that murder might have been done had not Caleb, in his young strength and natural bravery, gone between and sundered the combatants. Yet, if you will believe it, that poor sinner wept abundantly when he made full confession to me in Reedham Jail, and declared, what I have no reason to discredit, that he was never so near grace as in his earlier sojourn at the Mall. Therefore, why should not grace surprise some other wretched wayfarer

any day before I draw my last breath at the Mall—come upon him like a strong man, take from him his goods and deprive him of his armor wherein he trusted, and leave him not with the dismal wail ‘almost,’ but the jubilant shout, ‘altogether a Christian?’”

“Monsieur,” cried Grand’mère, impulsively, as she raised her grey eyes to his violet eyes, “I am older than you, but I am a weak, foolish woman; grant me a favor—give me your blessing.”

“All the blessings of the heaven above and the earth beneath!” responded Squire Gage, fervently; “though they are called down by an unworthy brother on a true sister. Rather, I should beg a Huguenot’s prayers for me and mine, and for my work, which is nearly ended. Shall we pray together, madam?”

In this manner two Christian enthusiasts pondered on Christian ethics, compared notes on good works, and thought no shame of reverently approaching their Father in heaven.

The squire was solicitous, with a country gentleman’s imperative hospitality, to entertain Grand’mère as became both her and him. With a delicate tenderness of respect he had even striven to recall old memories, and to send his usual habits to the wall for the occasion, so that the meal served at one end of the kitchen, with its fruit, white wine, and the nosegay of all the autumn flowers then blowing in Dame Lucy’s disenfranchised parterres, should be as like as possible to the French feast which he had once seen served up, in an English parsonage, by the quick instincts of a soul as generous as his own.

Grand’mère received every gracious attention with a gratitude and a gratification still more gracious.

“Monsieur,” she exclaimed, in her lively, metaphorical way, looking round on the tankards, the books, the pictures, and the banquet, with eyes which would never grow too dim to sparkle, “it is as if you had got cray-fish from Montfaucon, wild boars from Ardennes, fierce bears from the Pyrenees. It is as if you had received an intimation that the three Magi were coming to visit you, and had made your preparations accordingly.”

The young squire was from home, which was only a partial disappointment to Grand’mère, since it was one part

of her intention to make the most searching, interested inquiries, which her perfect politeness would permit, respecting the disposition and inclination of Monsieur Caleb.

In truth, very little importunity was needed in order to obtain the desired information, for here “the old man eloquent” was full of very pardonable fatherly garrulity. His son Caleb was his first and last born—his only child, the son of Rachel, the prop of his old age, the desire of his fading eyes. He christened him without fear as the gift of God, and beheld in their relationship, not only the opportunity for the lawful indulgence of his natural affections, but the type of all that is tender and true, loyal and sacred, binding the creature to the Creator, the manifold children to the universal Father.

It sounded as if the father and the son were not only filial, but fraternal in their regard, as if they were a pair of close friends, such as two good men living alone together in a circle of dependents might well become. Yet this freedom and familiarity disturbed Grand'mère's calculations a little. Squire Gage not only expatiated contentedly on the assistance which his son rendered him, and the confidence which he reposed in him; but he recounted gleefully the vigorous, stubborn mental encounters the two had on the subjects wherein they differed; the lessons they gave each other in opposite sciences, and the news with which they twitted each other on their failures. Grand'mère was actually tempted to hold up her hands and cry halt. She could hardly fathom such a relationship; she had been accustomed to playful as well as tender friendship between mother and son, but between father and son, even where there was devoted affection, she had witnessed no such liberty. It required Grand'mère's forbearance and her liking for the family at the Mall to look over this dangerous license, and make her attribute it to English air and English institutions alone.

Having subdued this single scruple, Grand'mère came at last to the object of her mission, not without *finesse* and circumlocution; because, though her character was in essentials clear as crystal, it included in its elements delicate French tact and ingenuity. The substance of the errand was quite simple: Grand'mère had a grand-daughter, Squire Gage had a son, and the promising young man and

young woman, both moderately endowed with the goods of fortune, were contemporaries and neighbors: was there no significance, no suitability in these things? Grand'mère made a proposal of a treaty of marriage between the Squire's son and her grand-daughter, Yolande Dupuy. She had no notion that she was doing any thing but conferring the highest honor by the overture, while it was a matter of course that it should come from her. She was fully persuaded that the squire and she were the persons strictly entitled to settle the preliminaries of any matrimonial alliance entered into by their children, and that no one, not even the principals, could be more deeply interested or more sensible of the importance of the step suggested. Grand'mère, therefore, spoke with quiet dignity and with a due consciousness of her authority in the matter.

The squire was somewhat taken aback as Grand'mère, in fairness to her grandchild, fluently, but without exaggeration, summed up briefly the advantages of the match, dwelling on Yolande's good qualities, her virtue and wisdom, her truth to her parents, and her sweetness to her Grand'mère. The comparatively innocent seclusion in which she had grown up, the fitting instruction she had received, the personal attractions (though these were but a *bagatelle*) that she possessed, and the modest but respectable dowry which her father was able and willing to give her, all these were faithfully touched on. Then Grand'mère went nimbly over to the other side of the question, and dwelt nobly, liberally, and at far greater length, on the merits of the young squire, in his reputation, his family, his *ménage*. Yolande's father and mother would do their utmost to meet the young man's gifts with their Yolande's goodness. They wished to marry their daughter while they could still choose for her in marriage, and give her hand where there was least risk of a fatal error. And Squire Gage, who was a father, would not blame them or scorn them because they were foreigners and French.

The squire was not altogether so confounded as a modern, learned, and devout squire—did such exist—might be nowadays. Marriages continued frequently to be family alliances in houses far below the rank of those of dukes and earls. Squire Gage's father had found his wife

selected, sought out, and all but married to him by an obliging and active-minded kinswoman, and the squire had never had any reason to regret his father and mother as other than a well-matched, well-satisfied couple. The early Methodists were accustomed to view wedlock with a strong reference to the interests of the society. In this light influential members, without hesitation or fear, arranged and carried through marriages for the good of the meeting-house or chapel first, the individuals' claims and characters being glanced at afterward. Some of the obscurer conferences might even occasionally decide them by lot, like the Moravians. Squire Gage remembered that it had been an obstacle to his own union, and regarded as a serious difficulty and danger, that it had taken its rise in the motions of carnal affection and the promptings of the natural man, and not in a single eye to the evangelization of the world, and a profound respect for the extension of Christianity.

So Squire Gage was not inclined to silence or scout Grand'mère's mission, even if his goodness had suffered him to be hasty in condemning and deriding what had been undertaken in good faith and sober earnestness. He consented to take the proposal into mature consideration without a thought of doing any wrong to his friend and son. He freely admitted that he would rejoice to have a young gentlewoman at the Mall again, particularly if she were of Grand'mère's race and rearing. He was not such a miserable bigot, either to his nation or to his Methodism, as to undervalue the whole French people and the noble band of Huguenot exiles. He confessed there was some call for another mistress at the Mall, though the mention of it brought the rheum to the eyes which had seen its last mistress. But Madam could comprehend and make allowance for that. One who would deal kindly with his infirmities, and would manage the women, among whom he and Caleb could not enter and hector to the extent of lending a rough lick to an incorrigible malcontent, would be a great blessing to them. The greatest scolds among the women, poor creatures, were always mild negations to him, but there was more than a suspicion that they were apt to employ their leisure in idle bickerings and petty feuds, which though not serious, were not seem-

ly or comfortable to their faith. They would mind a mistress, especially if she were like his old dame, a dove among barn-door fowls. Certainly, for that and for other reasons Squire Gage would gladly hail his son's early entrance into marriage, which was honorable in all men; but his healthy instinct impelled him to add, gently, in the end, "Nevertheless, my good madam, doth it not strike you that our theme savoreth alarmingly of a *mariage de convenance*?"

"Of what else, Monsieur? and of what can you make a better market than of the noblest sort of *convenance*—fitness, obedience to parents, dutifulness—not of fancy and passion?" demanded Grand'mère, warmly. "Ah! trust me, my Monsieur, when the good choice has been made with prayer and blessing by the careful parents, sacred, chaste, sweet wedded love (all the purer and higher that it is born of duty, and not of desire) will follow without fail in those good and honest hearts on which, and not on their memories alone, is written the substance of their catechism, '*Quelle est la principale fin de la vie?*' and '*Quel est le souverain bien des hommes?*' Fie! Monsieur, would you rather have the boys and the girls madly pursuing, and setting their weak seals blemished to their idle, wandering imaginations?" exclaimed Grand'mère, in such unfeigned horror, that under her *empressement* Squire Gage felt all but convicted of impropriety and indiscretion. "You are English—and the English, the best of them, love their own wills in the affections," continued Grand'mère, more temperately; "but when every great point is gained, is it that you would cast fancy and passion into the opposite *panier*, and suffer it to weigh down the ass, Monsieur? The marriages of Isaac and Rebekah, of Boaz and Ruth—say what were they but the noblest sort of *mariages de convenance*?"

Squire Gage had been slipping his fingers into his great family Bible to find the entry of his son's birth and baptism in order to show it to Grand'mère, in return for the sight of the certificate of the Protestant baptism of Yolande Dupuy, with which he had been favored. As he did so he was tempted to have recourse to a practice in favor with the old Methodists—even with Mr. John himself—which was not engaged in lightly, far less irreverently, but which nevertheless had a strange resemblance to

the heathen art of divination, christened by a Christian name.

“What think you of the *Sortes Biblicæ*, madam? Shall we try a verse of Holy Scripture, to ascertain what we are putting our hands to?”

Grand’mère acquiesced readily. She was not farther before her age than good Squire Gage, and she had her superstitions as well as her French prejudices. She clasped her hands and leaned forward breathlessly, while the squire put his hand darkly into the closed Book on an unseen verse, and opening it read aloud—

“My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction.”

“Well, that is plain sailing,” declared Squire Gage, submissively, and even cheerfully, seeing Grand’mère’s expressive face fall at the indication. “Whatever may come of our communing—and take note this admonition doth not impugn its good ending—patience is a virtue like to be in request for all concerned. I confess I have always been over-fain to seek relief from present evils. If you please, we will take the matter quietly, dear dame, and permit the young people’s hearts to speak, though it were but one word. I do not fear that they will speak forwardly.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE SECRET OF THE RIDE TO THE MALL—A WOMAN DESPISED IN HER YOUTH.

GRAND’MÈRE returned in good heart to the Shottery Cottage. Her ride to the Mall had only been the commencement of the preliminaries. She had never dreamed of settling the affair in a single interview; that would not have been according to her notions of discretion. She was pleased with all she had seen at the Mall; with the devotion and charity on a large scale her heart was full. But though Grand’mère talked to Yolande by the hour on the veritable hospice she had visited, and on the beauty of character she saw in its founders, not a word did she say which could make the girl cast down her shy eyes in perplexity and confusion. Grand’mère could, without com-

punction, institute a treaty of marriage for her granddaughter, but she would have thought herself the most indelicate of women had she breathed a syllable to the girl, who had her suspicions; and this notwithstanding that they were incessantly together, and full of fond confidences.

Unfortunately she was not so reticent elsewhere. Without a thought of any unwomanliness in her act, Grand'mère considered it but neighborly to whisper it to Madam Rolle of the rectory. With all her hopes and cares for her daughters, Madam Rolle had never imagined any thing so barefaced as this flagrant instance of French fashions and French morals, and was almost staggered in her esteem for the old Grand'mère who had tried to break the storm of her own calamity to her. As Madam Rolle kept nothing from the rector, she immediately imparted to him this startling bit of news; and in return he asked her to what young men he should propose Dolly and Milly? They must not, however, be ranters and Jacobins, who consorted with blaspheming, foul-mouthed, filthy shoe-makers and weavers, compared with whom honest chimney-sweeps were finished gentlemen; for he had made up his mind never to ask a favor from these, not even to rid him of his daughters.

Madam Rolle, like many another madam, was at a loss what to make of her husband's irony, and took refuge in the sympathy and indignation of her daughters. She set them up against their young French friend, who was taking such impudent means to get the better of them, and settle herself, before either of them was suited with a husband and an establishment.

Yolande, poor girl, could not understand why all of a sudden the rectory girls began, in French *parlance*, "to lift their noses at her," to speak at her, to twit her with what she could not help, and to which she was not as yet formally privy. In the end there was great mischief done; so bad, that it was all but irremediable.

Young Caleb Gage had little or no intercourse with the Rolles. The greatest hardship and danger of his position was, that it wholly isolated him from those of his fellows and equals who were not of his father's way of thinking. It mattered little that Caleb the younger differed in his

conclusions from Caleb the elder. Unless the young squire had been prepared to place himself in utter antagonism to the old father whom he venerated so deeply and loved so dearly, his own moderation and his reaction in favor of general Church standards would have profited him nothing.

Men and women of the present day know little of Methodism, if they do not understand that it was the burden of a world lying in the grossest wickedness, riot, and wantonness, which drove into vehement protest so many good and honest hearts—drove them into the extravagances of enthusiasm and the excesses of zeal, if, indeed, they were extravagances and excesses. For, to judge correctly of such so-called extravagances and excesses, it is necessary to contrast a house like the Mall—its voluntary relinquishment of the state and attributes of gentle station—with houses where notorious wickedness was daily committed, where the same card-party sat, ate, slept, and woke again, while they gambled away their fathers' lands, their children's bread, and even their wretched wives, for twenty or thirty hours at a stretch. In those days women died prematurely, in agonizing pangs, from the poison of white paint; while men were found guilty of forgery and highway robbery, and spirits went into the outer darkness for a set of French tapestry, or Indian paper-hangings, a china baby, or a piece of velvet of a rarely pretty device. If we faithfully compare the free reception and wholesale housing of the indigent and outcast at the Mall with the bitter penury and terrible struggles of men and women ruined by the infamous bubble schemes of the era, or by wildly striving to raise themselves out of their low estate of barbarous ignorance and base depravity, then we will, perhaps, form a fair estimate of the influence of Methodism, not only on the corrupt refinement of men of the world, but on the densely stupid, fatuous, sensual animalism of the poor colliers and pottery-men, down whose grimy faces the tears of penitence, purer than dew-drops and brighter than diamonds, “washed the white channels” of a new and better nature at the pleadings, and strivings, and wrestlings in prayer of Whitfield and his brethren. Do not shrink from thinking of that dissolute world, I beseech you, if you would be simply just to the Methodists, and neither

exaggerate their Christianity and their heroism, nor extenuate their mysticism and their lapses from the orthodoxy of this or that great creed. After all, one may be permitted to doubt whether the decided position which the early Methodist leaders took up, and the passionate nature of their testimony, were exaggerated and excessive, in view of the crying evils and the barren latitudinarianism with which they waged war.

These sentences are written in the old sense of apology for what needs no apology in the modern meaning of the word, and in feeble illustration of the causes of the peculiarities of Methodism. Little do modern men and women, for the most part, know of the brand which the early Methodists bore, when their strenuous efforts at reform were looked upon as the most uncalled-for and insupportable acts of aggression; when they were shunned as men stricken with the pest would have been; when they were accused of the most incredible fanaticism and socialism, and bemoaned by their friends and neighbors as being more left to themselves than drunkards, gamesters, or common thieves. Save the early Christians, no religious sect—not even the Reformers, whether Lollard or Lutheran—excited such a storm of hostility, or were so universally despised, detested, and reviled as were the followers of Wesley.

The young squire of the Mall was so neglected and foresworn by his brother squires and the families of the better classes in the neighborhood, that had it not been for his healthy, independent nature, and his great friendship for his father, he might have been driven into the low company to which Methodism was then generally believed to incline.

Old Squire Gage had been fortified against the deleterious and destructive consequences of such an atmosphere by such airs from heaven as visit few men's souls. It is not asserted here, however, that it had not injured him, developed oddities in him, sapped ever so little his simplicity and energy, and made him, notwithstanding all his benevolent projects, more of an abstract thinker and dreamer than a practical man.

But young Caleb Gage could hardly expect the same immunity; and it was well for him that he was not equally

tried. In the public places which his principles did not forbid him to frequent, and in one or two neighboring houses which, for ancient alliances' sake, still offered an open door to a Gage of the Mall, Caleb had some intercourse with his class, and was not so entirely proscribed, denounced, and doomed to live down his differences of creed and life as his father had been.

Thus it chanced that, happening to attend the yearly fair at Reedham, Caleb Gage supped and stayed for the night at the house of a tolerant Reedham physician, who had been his father's worthy doctor for the last half century. Doctor Humphrey was no Methodist himself, though he had accorded his evidence:

"I like to attend your patients at the Mall, squire; for the most part they're patient as well as patients; and I'd liever wait on their death-beds than those of most others, for, however sorry they live, they make up for it by dying well, they do—yes, your Methodists die well."

At Dr. Humphrey's, on this occasion, Caleb met, among other young people, Mr. Philip Rolle's daughters; and in the intervals between the games and the songs he had to submit to be stared at and tittered over, and viewed as a curiosity almost as great as the wild beasts they had visited at the shows in the afternoon. Mr. Caleb Gage had himself visited the wild beasts, and he had also gone and listened for a time to the Methodist preacher, whose stage was competing with the dancing booths, and had joined heartily in the hymn-singing; and when there had been a threatening demonstration in the crowd in that quarter, he had sprung up on the stage, and prepared to use his personal influence to ward off violence, and take his chance with the preacher and his friends.

Caleb was not without something of what Grand'mère would have called *la beauté du diable*—the morbid attraction of forbidden fruit to his detractors and assailants; and he had himself a half-amused perception of the fact, while he had no great inclination to return the compliment. The Methodist home was a different school of manners, to say the least of it; and these vaporizing, swaggering young men, and swimming, bridling young women, appeared ruder-tempered and emptier-headed to Caleb than they would have appeared to his father, because Caleb as yet

judged largely by the surface ; while the old squire had a poet's and a prophet's plumb-line to fathom many feet deeper into human nature.

There was one gibe constantly recurring on the least provocation in sentiment, or forfeit, or game of the Traveler, and this was Caleb's supposed attachment to French fashions. The gibe was followed by taunting assertions that somebody's troth might have been sold in his cradle, and that he might have exchanged the pap-boat for the wedding-ring, so tame-spirited was he.

"My head is somewhat thick," admitted Caleb Gage to Dolly Rolle, at a crisis of the by-play. "I must confess that you distance me in your merriment. I can not think what you are all driving at. When did I discover a palate for foreign kickshaws ? (It is as clear as the sun that it is me you mean, so none need go to deny it.) As far as I can tell, my tastes are all English ; for that matter, I have no chance of gratifying them otherwise, since I have not so much as the entrance to any strange circle, unless it be that of the French Huguenot family at the Shottery Cottage in Sedge Pond, which my father esteems so highly."

Caleb did not observe, or else he paid no heed to Dolly's smiles, nods, and winks at his unlucky allusion.

"As to marriage," Caleb went on stoutly, "I presume I should have some inkling, if I were ever so little started on the road to the church on that solemn business ; whereas, mistress, I have as little thought of marrying till I cut my wisdom-teeth as the black fellow behind your chair has of taking a white wife."

"If you speak so fast," answered Dolly, pertly, "I shall either think that it is part of your Methodist religion to swear down one's throat white is black ; or else that you are the most deceived, misused young man who has ever been chosen a bridegroom without his consent asked."

"Think nothing of the kind, madam," replied Caleb, annoyed and indignant at her folly ; "but tell me right out, if your high-church religion have the courage and the honesty to do so—which, to be sure, I doubt not," he corrected himself, already ashamed of his recrimination. "What do people say of me ? They must needs have little to busy themselves about when they tell cock-and-bull stories on so trumpery a subject?"

“They do say extraordinary things of you, good young sir,” asserted Dolly, with a toss of her head; “they say, of a verity, that you are right-down affianced to your white-faced, moon-struck neighbor, Ma’melle Yolande Dupuy, who, if she be not a Papist, is certainly a mystic, so unlike is she to the rest of her sex—even to her wise Grand’mère, to whose apron-string she is pinned. I’d rather have had Grand’mère, sir; but you’ll be pinned to her likewise all the same, if she and your cracked father have courted for you, and engaged you without so much as saying, ‘By your leave.’ But I suppose they hold you so good a psalm-singing boy that you have no mind or will of your own in the matter? But surely in common justice they will let you know before the banns be published, that you may not look sheep-faced or grow white about the gills before the whole parish. To have gotten the sack were nought to it.”

Dolly had been crammed and prompted by sharper and more malicious rustic wits than her own, or she never could have accomplished all these smart hits; but the sense of this only galled and fired Caleb Gage’s manliness and spirit the more.

“It is all an untruth, an absolute untruth, Mistress Rolle,” he declared, quickly and positively, “so manifest and ridiculous a fabrication, that it puzzles me reasonable people should combine—not to credit it—that they can not do—but to circulate it.”

But even while he spoke there flashed across his memory the coincidences, not only that his father had that very morning sounded him as to his opinion of every member of the family at the Shottery Cottage, and had pressed him when his answers were careless and vague, but that the squire had repeatedly of late taken occasion to recommend him to unite himself with another, and had dwelt wistfully on his own happiness in the wife whom he had lost, and endeavored to ascertain how Caleb stood affected to such a change of condition. The young man had naturally thought the discussion uncalled for and premature, and had parried it, or been restive under it, as his temper led him. But now that these recollections flashed across his mind inopportunely, Caleb’s brown face flushed, and he contracted his square brow and bit his lips.

" You are not angry with me, Mr. Caleb !" cried Dolly, shrugging her shoulders, and adding slyly, " Men are not angry at mere idle reports, and this one is no fault of mine; I did not raise it. I had it from my mother, and she had it from head-quarters—from old Madam Dupuy, upon my life. Now, be as angry with me as you like; nobody can say that I can help it."

The result of the spiteful treachery committed at Dr. Humphrey's was that Caleb Gage was tempted for twenty-four hours to think that his father and the Methodists were right in abjuring worldly society, and that he, for one, would never enter it again. More than that, on the next occasion that Caleb passed through Sedge Pond, and conveyed a letter from his father to Grand'mère, he refused obstinately to alight and partake of a second breakfast, or even to sit for a moment and exchange greetings at the garden gate. And when, in course of time, Caleb encountered Grand'mère and Yolande at some little distance near the door of the parish church, he did all he could to avoid the encounter, turned his head, looked another way, and behaved in all respects like a person deeply affronted.

" Somebody has growed high and mighty all of a sud-  
dent," remarked Priscille, decisively; " I lay the young  
squire of the Mall have got a flea in his ear. Sirrah !  
quotha, if that be your Methody humility in taking the  
first word of scolding, I would not give my head for the  
article ; it seems to me it do come out of the same pot as  
ourn and parson's at the rectory, after all."

" Adieu *paniers*, vintages are done with," murmured Grand'mère, sorrowfully. She was not so much offended as hurt at the smart received in the house of a friend, at trying in a wearisome struggle to dissever the wrong from the wrong-doer, to count old Squire Gage blameless, and to make allowance for the willfulness and perversity of the young man. Grand'mère felt that she had made a grievous blunder ; not in the step she had taken—that was quite in accordance with her best light and the customs of her fathers—but in the direction into which the step had carried her. She had been rash, inconsiderate of English habits and tones of thought. At the same time she trusted with all her good heart that this brave *garçon*, who had slighted her child, been offended by their gracious prefer-

ence, and returned it with what in French eyes was little less than brutal rudeness and marked insult, might not, after all, prove reprobate. But she feared much that her early depreciation of the free footing on which he stood with his father was correct, and that the young man was in the first stage toward the blasted ruin of lawlessness and infidelity.

Yolande endured for a longer season the changing moods of the Rolle girls, who soon began to condole with her on the failure of her match, and this, too, in accents widely removed from the spirit of their unusual contentment with their own present lot and confident anticipations of good fortune in the future. Then Yolande went to Grand'mère in her room, stood before her, and looking up in her face, said—

“Grand'mère, I am yours to do with what you will. Nothing can alter that. You will always know it is so. It is our French interpretation of a child's obedience and devotion, and any thing else to us is mockery. But tell me, Grand'mère, and do not call me insolent for asking it (because, see you, I have been brought up in this harsh England, and you yourself have bidden me consort with loud-spoken English girls), you have offered me to this young man, and he has rejected me—is it not so?”

Yolande spoke with scorn, but it sounded as if it was scorn of herself, and of no other.

“You put it in hard words, Yolande, which is to pour the drug into an ugly glass,” remonstrated Grand'mère, mildly. “It suffices that there was a project of marriage thought of for you by your friends, which on thinking over a second time they have abandoned by mutual consent—yes, I will say that now. Does that harm you?”

“I do not know, I can not tell,” hesitated Yolande. “You had the right—you would serve me with your own dear grey hairs. But oh! Grand'mère,” burst out Yolande, hiding her face in a paroxysm of distress, “why would you marry me if you risked shaming me? Why would you marry me at all, thrusting me on some man who does not want me, to whom I should be a burden and a bugbear? Oh, Grand'mère! it feels like shame, hot shame, and cruel wrong.”

“But, surely, this is morbid,” Grand'mère rebuked her

child, in a little displeasure and a great deal more anguish and dismay. "This is English spleen and mad pride, of which I used to accuse you in jest—foolish jest. Your mother was given in marriage; your grandmother before her. Think you not that their fathers and mothers looked about them and made false starts, *coute que coute*, before they fell on the right *parti*? Are you so much better than they?"

"I am no better, Grand'mère, I am not half so good. But why must you have me married?"

"You may be left alone any day, you must be one day; then what would become of you, my child? You would have bread enough to eat, that is true, but would the world leave you to eat it in peace? Would it not abuse and betray you? There are no retreats for the Huguenots even in France, there never was any but *aigue morte* and the prisons. Women may live single in England without injury or scandal; but I have not seen it—it is not the way in our country. It is only that I have been a stupid old woman in your interests, *fille*, and I am very sorry for it."

"Do not say that, Grand'mère. It is a trifle, a tuft of thistle-down, I mock at it. There, I toss it from me and catch it again for my own amusement, don't you see? A man is free to have his choice, and his refusal breaks neither my neck nor my heart, though it throws a stone at me. Rest tranquil, Grand'mère. Let us return to our sheep, our lace, to what you were telling me of your pigeons, your herbs at home in Languedoc."

"It is well," said Grand'mère to herself; "it is but the girl's spirit which is wounded, her heart is mute like a little fish, sleeps as a *sabot*—and so it should, till it wake up by her husband's side. Who would rouse and force it into life sooner?"

Ah! short-sighted Grand'mère, if Yolande's had been a mean, jealous, grasping temper, you might have been secure; Caleb Gage's repudiation and aversion would have done its work. But with the small value Yolande set upon herself, and the large value you taught her to put on Caleb Gage, teaching all the more effectual that it had no direct personal reference; the impressions which you had labored to give to her of the young squire's manliness,

liberality, truth, and tenderness—impressions made on a surface altogether blank, and capable of lightly and rapidly receiving them, and weaving them into a young girl's pure, graceful dreams;—it seemed no more than natural to Yolande that Caleb Gage should have nothing to say to her, there was no flaw in his nobility on that account, since he had not made a single advance from which he had drawn back. It was just, it was almost right that he should not find her worthy, he would not be less a hero in the girl's magnanimous eyes because of that. And she felt, with a throb of generous thankfulness, that she was not so unworthy as that came to, though he might have pained and humiliated her, and mingled a single strain of loving despair in the original gravity and thoughtfulness of her youth.

Days passed over the cottage, and Grand'mère watched Yolande covertly and incessantly, and saw, under the fair front which the young girl was sedulous to preserve, that she was still abstracted, and only fitfully interested in what was passing around her. She was liable to flashes of feverish restlessness and flushes of bitter mortification, and she sighed long and sorely when she thought nobody heard her drawing those deep, sad breaths, which, it is not altogether a figure to say, drain the life blood from the heart. Grand'mère believed it was high time to interfere and speak to Yolande, to seek to probe the wound which she had helped to inflict, with purer fingers.

“Yolandette,” she addressed the girl, lying wide awake in the hush of night, with no light upon her but that of the pale moon and the dim lamp, “hide nothing from me; it is my due, for I have nursed you in my bosom, and if I have hurt you I have a double right to know all.”

“To what good, Grand'mère?” pleaded Yolande; “you will but widen the breach between me and my old self, and increase the scandal.”

“I will not; I, an old mother, will show you what is worth all the sorrow, and will bring you consolation.”

“How can you, Grand'mère?” objected Yolande, incredulously and desperately. “There is consolation for great, splendid griefs, but not for a girl's weak, vain delusions, though they cause her to fret and pine for them. Consolation does not demean itself to such poor, common, child-

ish trials as these. Let me be, Grand'mère; let me rather crush them down, beat them like a stone under my feet. Trust me, I am wiser than my elder in this."

"No, no, that is a villainous mode—a heathen mode. Consolation is heavenly; if it were not so, I grant you it would not stoop so low; and yet, without that royal condescension to the least and the silliest soul, it would not be big enough even for earth. Listen to me, Yolande: dost thou feel womanly betimes, and as the heavy price of thy womanliness, dost thou recognize thyself in the morning of thy day as 'a woman forsaken,' despised in thy youth? So thou art called, in the words of the Bible, which were not spoken to a low-born, tormented, embittered woman truly, but to the true Israel, the spiritual Church. Notwithstanding, there are the words and the figures, and what will you—that it was the sympathy of the stern old prophet which breathed through their marvelous tenderness, or that it was Another who put them into Isaiah's wild imagination and on the burning lips which the live coal had touched—Another, the Friend of publicans and sinners, and of weak women as well as strong men."

"Are there such words, Grand'mère?" whispered Yolande, stirred and softened with awe and emotion. "I have read the Bible every morning and every evening, like other Huguenot girls, but I never discovered them or took them to myself."

"Nay, nor do we ever, *ma mie*, till we want them, or the Spirit shine upon them, because the well of Scripture is deep; still, truth is at the bottom of the well, Yolande, waiting for us when we need it, if we will have it. Listen better, Yolande." The lamp was trimmed; Grand'mère took out her Rochelle Bible from beneath the pillow, fixed her glasses, and with her shrunk ivory finger turned over the yellow pages and pointed to the spot, producing more convincing effect, and one more in keeping with moral and spiritual powers than when she and Squire Gage had recourse to the *Sortes Biblicæ*.

"Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

“ For thy Maker is thine husband ; The Lord of Hosts is his name ; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel ; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

“ For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.”

“ Grand’mère,” said Yolande, quivering with eagerness, “ the remembrance is, oh ! so sweet from the great Bridegroom. I shall hold up my head again ; I shall look *him* in the face again, Grand’mère. I shall not mind how I am laughed at and lightly esteemed ; I shall think that I am good for something since my foolish yearning heart is read by Him who numbereth the stars and calleth the roll of prophets and martyrs, and ordereth the march of empires and worlds.”

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE ROLLES OF THE CASTLE.

REEDHAM was one of those old-fashioned towns in which the jail was the central ornament. The shops were low-browed, and not much better than hucksters’ stalls ; but there was the beauty of irregularity about the better class of houses, advancing and retreating as they did on the causeway, and showing genuine antique oriel windows and balconies, with occasional vines festooning and tinting afresh the red brick.

One day in early spring the rector of Sedge Pond had occasion to ride into Reedham. Approaching the market cross, he could not help uttering an exclamation as he saw a large printed placard posted there, signed “ Audrey Rolle.” A considerable gathering of rustics and townspeople gaped round it.

“ Hath my lady put the crown on her vagaries and her usurpation of a man’s place by proposing to sit in Parliament herself ? ” mused the rector. “ Indeed, there remains only this, that she and the like of her have not tried ; and, by my word, if they set their minds on it, neither king nor constitution will balk them. Alake ! alake !

what waste of high spirit and high heart is there, and what might not my Lady Rolle have been and done, had she been born a man, and been set down in the shoes of Cornwallis, or Burgoyne, or Rodney, or Anson, or Sir Robert, or the Duke of Newcastle, or even of the Bishop of London, or he of Bath and Wells? As it is, all her wit doth not serve to keep her at home, abiding by her still-room and her needle, ruling her maids, and saying her prayers, like my simple wife and maids, who will be all agog at the mere thought of their patroness being in the country again."

The rector was somewhat relieved, however, when he found that the address only called on the men of Reedham to be early at the poll, and vote for the Honorable George Rolle. It concluded with the words: "As a mother who has already given a son to her country, and as the just price of her loss, I call upon my friends and neighbors to elect his brother, my next son, as their fitting representative in Parliament."

"Glad am I that it is the Honorable George, and not herself, whom my lady proposes, though she is a great deal better man than he is," thought the rector. "And so she makes gain of her poor hero, even for the honor and advantage of the house and of her remaining sons. Would I thus make gain of the pure memory of my Philip? Nay, perish the thought of all that was earthly in our connection. Let him henceforth shine as a star in the firmament for me; and let me obey my Master's orders, look up to Him, and covet earnestly to die in harness, fulfilling the measure of my duty as my boy fulfilled his, and following the Captain of our salvation. Nevertheless, I am a Rolle; and I owe my best duty to my lady, who has been good and kind to me according to her light, and my support to the Honorable George, who I am assured will never set the Thames on fire, save by dawdling between London and Paris, and heaping together pretty things like a vain woman. Still, how these puny fine gentlemen do shake off their affectations and follies, and strip and fight like men in the senate, bailing out and forcing back the roaring tide of loathsome bilge-water—anarchy, infidelity, and horrible confusion, like what has fallen out in His Majesty's colony of America, which threatens to become the grave

of true loyalty and virtue, in spite of hecatombs of corpses and rivers of gore poured into it, my Philip's gallant body and generous blood among the rest."

The first sight Grand'mère and Yolande had of Lady Rolle was in the obscurity of a whirlwind of dust raised by her chariot and that of her son, as they drove past Sedge Pond to the castle. But when once the family were lodged in their proper quarters, there was no longer any dimness or uncertainty about the fact of their presence. Every thing was turned upside down for them, and every movement was thenceforth directed toward them. They were like the sun in the sky, drinking in and absorbing all the exhalations, and in their central power controlling the growth and progress of every living creature around them. From the rector in his surplice to Deborah Pott between her water-pitchers, no one was exempt from the influence of the quality.

Grand'mère at first tried to resist the spell, and in a fit of national spirit talked of the great peers of France, the provincial parliaments, the lieutenants of the king, and the governors of provinces, compared with whom this English family were mere titled gentry, with mortgaged acres, and no power except that derived from their seats in Parliament, where they most undauntedly voted to each other sinecure upon sinecure.

But Grand'mère changed her mind after she had witnessed the Rolles' rule for a week, and seen the demonstrations at the village in the little church. The church was situated with a manifest respect to persons, inasmuch as it forced upon the village Christians a weary trudge through a miry by-way; while the castle Christians, who were not at the castle above once in two years, and only filled two pews when they were all at home, commanded an easy road by a side door from the park. There was such a scene there as Grand'mère had never witnessed in Roman Catholic France, where the great dignitaries of the Church, which aspires to rule the earth, exacted homage and humility from rival dignitaries, temporal princes, and peers, and did not often brook any claims save their own at the gates of either their noblest cathedrals or their simple parish churches. It was another matter when Lady Rolle appeared in the porch of the church at Sedge Pond.

She was attended by her maid, chaplain, physician, butler, and sometimes by one of her sons, who with his bodily eye would stare at the scraps of stained glass which he had often seen before, instead of looking with his mental eyes into Heaven, to which it was doubtful if his imagination had ever taken flight. Nay, he would audibly remark on a rusty iron sword on the monument of one of his fore-fathers, which would never pink armor or slash buff coat more, at the very moment when the priest was praying for the sword of the Spirit to pierce the souls of those present, and that of the son among them. When the castle party issued from their own particular door, the worshippers, who had flocked out before them, divided right and left, uncovered their heads, and bowed down as before divinities ; while the rector in his cassock, and his wife and daughters in their sacks and hats, hastened to show a proper example of reverence to superiors. At that crowning testimony Grand'mère grew very thoughtful, and in place of undervaluing the Rolles of the castle any longer, she called them a great institution, an ordinance of God, for good or for evil, according as it was used or abused.

Monsieur—an avowed time-server, notwithstanding his irony—bowed low before the men of the castle when they came down to the village to see a cock-fight, or play a game at skittles, or make trial of their horses entered for Newmarket, in the presence of a crowd of obsequious helpers and hangers-on. These Rolles were not mere roystering country quality—not men of many glaring sins and a few redeeming virtues, like the publicans and sinners of old. They were more dangerous and difficult subjects to deal with—men of the court and the town, men of wit and fashion, of taste and refinement. They were not so much men of strong passions as of overweening vanity, and its complement, cynicism. In their small hats and wigs, plain black ribbons or white ties, they lounged, as if half asleep, in the approaches to the castle, and only roused themselves to pick their slipperted steps, and carry their little French poodles and Italian greyhounds carefully over the puddles ; while they stood, took pinches of snuff, betted, laughed, swore, and contemplated enjoyably two barges running foul of each other on the river ; for, just as the degenerate Romans patted and petted their

gladiators, these affectedly squeamish, womanish men were very fond of supping on horrors.

Monsieur bowed still lower before my lady, who, as distinguished from my lord, swept along in such piled-up tissues, jewels, powder, and plumes as only the great ones of the earth could compass. She looked as if she had been born to wear them; and she never rested day or night, but, with her marvelously fine fretted features and falcon look, was forever pursuing some aim with headlong, devouring intentness, and the moment it was attained, setting out after some other objects, no matter what, so that it was hers to be sought after and gained.

Madame, Yolande's mother, looked darkly at those privileged players in a pageant, and called them Ahabs and Jezebels, Herods and Herodiases, and poured forth denunciations of "baldness in place of well-set hair, and burning for beauty." Yolande, too, looking with open, unconscious eyes at the new and striking figures on the stage of her life, and shrinking from the mocking, irreverent, unbelieving light alike in the soft, sleepy eyes of the men, and the ardent eyes of the woman, was tempted to say to Grand'mère—

"Are they not like Vashti, grown old and worn, but never weary? Do these unflinching spirits ever weary, Grand'mère? or do they only wear and wear, until the good God break them, and take them brokenly to Himself, and make of them the spirits which constitute heroes and martyrs? And the men, Grand'mère, are they not so many Absaloms? I like them not. I like my lady, who is eager to make us fear her—so eager, that she would tread over the necks and the hearts of the people, and her own also, Grand'mère—her own also. The men are false and cruel in their sleekness; they would sacrifice others, but save themselves, such as they are; I know it—I feel it."

"Yes, until to-morrow with your knowledge and feelings," reproved Grand'mère, soberly and sadly. "Who made you a judge between this woman and these men, or between them and yourself? Better shut you up in a portfolio at once, Mademoiselle my judge, than suffer you to look abroad with rash, harsh eyes and tongue. 'By their fruits ye shall know them?' Yes, truly; but these are the brethren; even an Apostle had nought to do in judg-

ing those who were without. And what fruits have you gathered of this great Rolle family?"

"Well, Grand'mère, I see enough of their mincing airs every day; I can scarce look at them when I see them in the walks."

"Ah! my heart, do you believe the Lord, when He tells how hard it is to be rich? Do you ever—I do not say thank the Lord that you are not of the *haute noblesse*—that were the Pharisee's prayer—pray to Him on behalf of those poor souls of whom He said that it was as easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle as for them to enter his kingdom? But when they do go through the eye of a needle, think you not they are such as are made rulers over ten cities? But we are as silly and selfish as the little birds toward the cats: we are unbelievers; and instead of praying for the rich and helping them, we envy them and go on hating and maligning them."

"Oh, Grand'mère!" cried Yolande, with a sharp, pained voice.

"Alas! it is true, my child, and the harsher our judgments the greater will be our condemnation! *Ma mie*, I think of a chapter in my Bible, and I try to show you a better way in which to regard these messieurs. See you how they stand to look at and admire a group of trees in the park, a herd of deer, the tower of the church from one point, and their own arcade from another. Nay, they can admire a pretty child of the village, so that she be clean washed for their inspection, and put not her finger in her mouth, or whimper and hint that she is thinly clad and coarsely fed, and so rub against their skins, and, as they say, dispel the illusion."

"Ah! yes, that is true; I have seen them," responded Yolande, thoughtfully.

"They have the sense of beauty, Yolande, and beauty is the gift of God. See you again how they caress their little dogs, and mourn when the Rosines and the Rosettes hang their heads or droop their tails. But that is unworthy of men who have the whole world of men and women to care for, you will tell me. Well, I can not say as to that; for the great God cares for the brutes as well as for men and women, and so I do not understand that branch of the argument."

“But it seems only a waste of tenderness, Grand’mère.”

“Yes, yes, I admit it is a waste of tenderness in those who have little of the commodity to spare. Still it is tenderness, and that is a nobler gift of God than beauty. And now I will tell you something that you see not (may you never see it !), but what the common voice says of the strange gentlemen. In their conduct to their women they are alternately savage and sweet. The most terrible wrongs, the most barbarous outrages, have been committed by strong brothers against weak sisters, as if the strong were demons ; and then, again, they act as if the pitying angels had dispossessed the demons, and had not disdain-ed to take up their abode for a season in the dishonored dwellings. My simple one, it is not that this man or that woman is a sinner above all other sinners, but that the foundations of the world are out of order, and that all our pleasant springs are poisoned, our good gifts marred. We are all sinners, great and small, as opportunities have enabled us or grace prevented us. We are all sinners, and —God be praised!—one is our Saviour. Leave Him to judge, and judge thou no more.”

Lady Rolle had only a faint impression of the Dupuys as being the foreign tenants of the Shottery Cottage. Madame Rolle of the rectory and her girls spoke of them to the great lady, but, sooth to say, the great lady paid little heed to such speech, calling it, in her sarcastic phrase, the cackle of ignorant country geese. But Lady Rolle, when the living book was in her hands, read a man better than most readers, and esteemed Mr. Philip, her friend and kinsman, more than any man alive, though it must be confessed she showed it quite as often by vexing as by pleasing him. And when he actually spoke of the Dupuys not unfavorably, her ladyship took it into her head to pay them a visit. She had, of course, no notion but that she could do any thing she liked at Sedge Pond, and be every-where humbly received and meekly deferred to ; and so she went about deranging every thing like some powerful, semi-malignant fairy. Her ladyship walked straight into the Shottery Cottage one day—right into the sombre parlor, and sat down, in Madame Dupuy’s chair, without invitation or leave. She caught a glimpse of Grand’mère as she was looking round her, quite prepared to domineer and

to find fault before she should make up for her bad behavior by showering upon the occupants her prodigal money and favors. She jumped up instantly, begged Grand'mère's pardon, and craved permission to call her, on the spot, a dear old friend. From that fresh starting-point Lady Rolle poured her winning, wonderfully idiomatic, though broken French into her listener's credulous ears, and conducted herself toward Grand'mère as an amiable fine lady, unique and exquisite in her amiability, no less than in her humors and vices.

Not that Lady Rolle ceased to be herself: she reflected on Grand'mère's family just a little of her bland good-will. She said distinctly to Madame—

“My good creature, you detest me at first sight. Have I such a bad taste, then, in a recluse's mouth? So much the worse for you, because I can really do without your liking, unless you put my dear old friend here up against me; whereas I might have been of some service to you, and been at ease in offering you the run of the castle gardens, dairy, dove-cote, and farm, all the year round; in putting a stop to the hobnailed louts molesting you, and compelling the county to be civil to you. Reflect what you have lost by finding in me your *bête noire*, your *croquemaitaine*.” Addressing herself coolly to Monsieur, she went on: “Sir, I shall have no scruple in being useful to you. If I mistake not, you understand the commerce of society. What will you take in exchange for permitting me to be intimate with your mother and your daughter? Do I not know that you will receive no injury from the words of a plain Englishwoman? You are too wise a man of the world. Is it not so?”

“Precisely, my lady; you comprehend perfectly the character of the *bourgeois* who is dying with the wish to make a market of every thing, without the exception of mother and child. I shall ask my price—when I want it.” So Monsieur met her challenge, raising his shoulders and showing his teeth.

And Lady Rolle told Yolande: “Child, I could be vastly fond of you, and carry you off, will he, nill he, to take the place of my last scarlet spider; for I am getting up a collection of monsters to outshine Margaret Cavendish's. I warn you, my good mother, that I worry all my friends’

hearts out of their bodies to help me with strange beasts, now that I have done with Greek marbles. But, child, you are not all your grandmother. I spy your mother in your face ; and, as you see, she and I no more take to each other than plaguey teeth to gritting sand. There, don't take the pet, you little fool ; perhaps hers is all the honester nature for not agreeing with mine. After sinners themselves, only saints and angels can put up with sinners ; don't you know that ? Be thankful, at least, that your mother is not a sinner of the same stuff as the French mothers whom I have known were made of. What were they like ? Bah ! Painted goddesses, ready to tear out the eyes of their own daughters, making frights of them, outraging them, to keep them from stepping on the *tapis* with themselves. I thank my stars that I have only long lazybones and grinning buffoons of sons, lest I should have seen rivals in my daughters, and bitten and devoured my own flesh and blood. But if the mothers were no better than they should be, how did it happen that the grandames were too good for this bad world ? Sure I can not tell. My wise head will not crack riddles like nuts. Grand'mère, you are not vexed with me ? Nay, then, I shall confess that I have been only in ill company, that to the gadflies all the poor midges figure as gadflies. Yes, yes, that is it ; and the French mothers are without reproach, like the old mesdames—like charming, wise, witty De Sevigné, whom we all dote upon, down to that snarling dog, Rolle. You are her marrow, my dear, beautiful old goody ! only what a pity that you are *bourgeoise* and Huguenot. Could you not be at least orthodox Catholic here, where it would not be a feather in your cap—quite the contrary ; so that you would still have the comfort of contradicting every body and continuing a martyr?"

"Pity that she is a Huguenot !—Be a Catholic !" gasped Madame. "Why does not the earth open and swallow her up ? *Mon mari*, you stand by and hear your mother insulted, the faith mocked ! Go ; I had not thought you so wicked. Who is this *scaramouche* of a De Sevigné ? I know her not ; I abjure her, for the company she keeps."

"Ah ! be quiet, my good woman," enjoined Lady Rolle, tranquilly ; "I do not mind you, De Sevigné does not mind you. Alas ! she has only existed for us in her like-

ness this half century and more. But it is refreshing to find man or woman who believes any thing, and who is not to say rude in her faith."

Lady Rolle courtesied politely to Madame (who turned her back with an exasperated mow), tapped the reluctant Yolande under the chin, kissed the hand of Grand'mère, and presented her own hand to Monsieur, with the most ineffable air of condescension, to be led to her chariot, which was standing there in its empty splendor, mobbed by the people of Sedge Pond.

That very afternoon Lady Rolle sent her own serving-man and woman with hampers of red Burgundy and white Hermitage, baked meats, and fruits, along with the last fashions and working-materials, to Grand'mère; thus overpowering the least mercenary but the most grateful spirit in the world. Madame, however, put her hands doggedly behind her back, and refused to touch the unclean thing. With the hampers came a little note, which began with an apology for her handwriting (she never could write, my lady said), and requesting permission to wait upon Grand'mère, and to bring her dish of tea with her, any time she could spare from the great business of the election, which she was to set agoing the next week. She was shocking bad company herself, and was but poorly supplied with any other up at the castle; she had no stomach for the dull, conceited country gentry, though she would not have said that for a pension just then. What she would like, would be to gossip by the hour about her dear, delightful Madame de Sevigné.

Madame de Sevigné was the key to Grand'mère's charm for Lady Rolle, just as Fletcher of Madeley had been the key to her attraction for the old squire of the Mall. In the teeth of the old, bitter grudge against the French, which the middle and the lower classes were given to cherish as being patriotic, the quality had not only the strong tendency to Gallic fashions of which young Caleb Gage was unjustly accused, but they had a great rage for one wonderfully endowed woman, whose Christian virtues and heathen insensibility, in the midst of the depravity of the court air she breathed, they were equally incapable of measuring and appreciating. Nevertheless, Les Roc hers, the Tour de Sevigné, the hôtel at Paris, the château

in Provence, were household words ; the stately and picturesque figures which had once moved there were treasured shapes ; while the unapproachable tender grace and *naïveté*, the keen shrewdness and ripe knowledge of the world—all indeed but the fervent, devout heart which the touch of moral pitch could not defile—were in that generation laboriously and affectedly mimicked in the mere-tricious correspondence of supercilious critics, arrogant men of letters, and statesmen as venal as they were powerful.

Grand'mère's world was infinitely wider, fresher, and more wholesome than that of her daughter-in-law. Grand'mère knew and eagerly acknowledged the sweet though strangely surrounded flower of French quality. At the same time, Grand'mère paid the penalty of her freer range. She did not see so clearly as Madame Dupuy did within her narrow limits. The elder woman was somewhat mystified and carried away by the homage offered—not to herself, but to her representative country-woman. And she, in her turn, began to descant to Yolande on Madame de Sevigné. She talked with enthusiasm of the bright, beautiful, loving, charitable, pious grandame, who, in the midst of abounding iniquity, remained faithful at every stage of her long life—true wife, fond mother, devoted friend ; who retired to solitude, and prayed in lowly abasement, who succored the poor with her own gentle hands, and who, in running from all the stilted glory and stereotyped gayety among which her lot was cast, retired not merely to her hay-fields, her bouquets of roses, and her portraits of her daughter, but to sick-beds, from which direly infectious and deadly maladies drove craven priests and doctors, where she nursed the bodies and ministered to the souls of suffering humanity, till the last sufferer who was to be relieved by her rose from bed, and saw the honored, aged kinswoman take her place and die in her stead. Grand'mère called Madame de Sevigné the Gama-liel who stood between the Jews and the Christians ; and, had she been well acquainted with English history, she might have called her heroine the John Evelyn who formed the link between the Cavaliers and the Puritans.

## CHAPTER XI.

## LADY ROLLE'S ADVANCES TO THE METHODISTS.

BUT Lady Rolle had not buried herself in the country, even in the pleasant spring-time, for the whim of ruralizing with an old Frenchwoman whom she discovered to be a *bourgeoise* counterpart of Madame de Sevigné. She had come for a much more serious affair, which tasked even her énergies—to carry the election of her second son, who was opposed by one of the new men just then creating a scandal by quitting the aristocratic ranks, as the Fabian house quitted old Rome. Debouching boldly on the outskirts of the people, these new men sought to inaugurate a more modest and more magnanimous form of government, and entered passionate protests against the policy, \*common in its glaring selfishness, of Montagues, Newcastles, Sandwiches, Hollands, Stanhopes, and Townshends—declaiming loudly against the gross excesses and the mean rapacity of the governing families.

Lady Rolle was a woman to live and die by her order. She could not conceive another state of matters, or another set of sympathies; and while her candidate dawdled and dozed over patterns of brocade and chintz, and shapes of tea-cups and footstools, without animation and interest enough to attempt more than the vulgar exposure and trouble of his nomination, Lady Rolle drove about day and night in her laced head, her velvet hat, her diamond stomacher, and her lutestring train.

“Never show face without your colors, my wenches,” she would advise her attendants, affably; “so you would awe the people, silence sauciness, and win the day. If I had stood in Queen Jezebel’s shoes, I, too, would have tired my hair and rouged my cheeks. But, look, that is what beats me and my parade hollow,” she would end, candidly pointing to Grand’mère, with her silver hair and benign smile, her scoured and darned Lyons silk. “There goes one of nature’s ladies—God Almighty’s gentlewomen.

He makes a few such in a century, and, sinner though I am, I know and honor them when I see them."

Lady Rolle cajoled, bullied, bribed, and dispensed her threats, her promises, and her gifts. Even golden guineas slid into every convenient aperture, not to say impartially, but with little regard to expense.

"It is a dirty world," she assured Mr. Philip Rolle, in answer to his remonstrances. "Keep your hands clean of it, Philip, if you will; but we who rule by main force, by our mouldering monuments, crumbling charters, lands, moneys, and the left-handed grace of kings—we must dab our fingers in the dirt to clutch our rights, or let them go; and if we only dab our fingers deep enough, by spending a score of thousands on our elections, like the Fitzwilliams and the Chandoses, aren't we as proud as peacocks of our dirt? Better let go our seigniorial rights than keep them at such a cost? No, sir, your cloth don't above half think any thing so unearthly. You leave that and other vagaries to my grand-uncle, the venerable archdeacon; and I warn you in time it just caused the poor dear old man to escape being made a bishop. And with the men who deny the bishops—the Methodists whom I've heard on the road to Tyburn as I've visited the French prophets in Soho—I mean to try every thing till I find them all a-wanting. If you have grown mealy-mouthed yourself, Philip, I'm sorry; but I shan't give in to you. You are my cousin, my old friend, and spiritual director in a way: I don't dispute it; but I snap my fingers at you in any other light; for what on earth have elections got to do with church services, and sermons, and poor-boxes? If you can not be a man of the world, and aid me, pray mind your own business, sir. I shall fight my indifferent son's battles with the weapons which come to my hand, and these are coaxing, coercion, corruption if you please. None but a Rolle shall represent Reedham in the country's parliament while there is breath in my body, or a man of the name above-ground to fill the seat."

The rector fumed and fretted, and ate out his stubborn, loyal heart, or flung it down for those jays, Lord Rolle and his brother, to hold their heads on one side, strut over, and deride. But Mr. Philip Rolle did not dream of forbidding his wife, and Dolly, and Milly to give their company and

assistance to Lady Rolle in her close canvass. Ignorant innocents like them could know and understand nothing of political purity, civic claims, and the cowardlinesses and basenesses of men.

My lady would have taken up Yolande Dupuy also, and traded with her quaint seriousness and simplicity, and classic-like beauty, and her foreign words and ways, as she traded with the buxom, rampant rectory girls ; but happily, or unhappily, an instinct rather than Madame Dupuy's furious face, or Yolande's own recoil, arrested the proposal which, with its refusal, would have served betimes to break a spell ; for Lady Rolle was as incapable as a child of brooking contradiction, and Grand'mère would as soon have sentenced her child to the public pillory as have consented to such an exposure.

"What ! send a young girl to knot ribbons, embroider scarfs, and pin them on parson and publican, to drink healths and be toasted back, bandy fairings, wheedle, importune ? No, not to have transferred the triple crown, in figure, to the wasted brows of Jean Calvin."

"But la !" cried Dolly and Milly, with crimson cheeks and flashing eyes, "whatever are you frightened for ? We are safe when we are in my lady's good company, even though we be followed and pulled sleeves for. The other side can do no more to trounce us, than groan at our bravery. Our very fellow, Black Jasper, doesn't turn up the whites of his eyes one bit. It is not as if it were a fire or an earthquake ; but, indeed, my lady tells us the pretty women up in London have caps made express to appear in at the street fires. And so small do they hold the earthquakes, which we two turned slug-a-beds for each time our papa read about them in the news prints, that a mad wag went about t'other morning rapping like thunder with all the knockers, and bawling 'Three o'clock, and a monstrous fine earthquake !'"

The ferment extended to Sedge Pond, and what with ringing of bells, galloping to and fro of messengers, watering of horses at the ale-house troughs, and the quenching of men's thirst at the ale-house barrels, the drowsy, miry, surly little village stirred and stretched itself.

"What a *bruit* ! Grand'mère, can any thing on the earth be worth all this when the question is not of the

world's jubilee? Goes it well with creatures who have souls to be saved to act as *gensdarmes* about estates and chambers? Parliaments! What miracles have parliaments wrought that men should make such ado about their own miserable voices in them?" asked Yolande, with a girl's audacious, vague austerity.

"Listen to the little fool!" cried Grand'mère, in lively impatience. "This *mélée* may be unworthy, but all is worth which God gives man or woman to do, and among worthy deeds none is worthier than that which belongs to the father-land. I tell you, Yolande, that because even good women are often sceptical and irreligious on the subject of the consciences of the men in politics and the government, the mothers and wives do much to render sons and husbands knaves and villains to the country. Ah! women do not comprehend politics; government is not their province. But to help in honesty of view, in soundness of conviction, and uprightness of life in the men—that is the province of the women, as it ought to be their pride. Hold! the women will weep and break their hearts over the men's hardness, insensibility, and contumaciousness toward the outward constitution of a church, and the same women will be callous to mock at, and even try wickedly to subvert, the men's sincerity to the Spirit of God within them, in truth and devotion to their country. It is a case of 'This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.'"

"But what have men done in parliaments?" asked Yolande.

"They have done all, child—brought the freedom to worship God and to live at peace with men, and have broken the rod of the oppressor both in Church and State. Learn to condemn and despise nothing but sin, my little one, far less the most sacred and the least selfish call to the righteousness, the wisdom, and the courage of the men. The sun of Ivry will shine like ten suns on that day—I do not say when no more fine ladies will drive their chariots over men's heads and hearts in what they call carrying the elections—but when the men will approach solemnly, reverently, earnestly, to give their votes, as though they were to take the Holy Sacrament; and when the women will look on with their hearts in their eyes, and pray humbly

the while that the men may not be time-servers, double-dealers, hypocrites."

The election was so far imperiled, though my lady would not allow it to be whispered, that she found it advisable to address herself to Squire Gage, who was out of the immediate neighborhood, and had no direct voice in the matter, but whose influence—not territorial or commercial, but personal and moral—was understood to be great.

Lady Rolle wrote what she called one of her scrawls, singularly characteristic in its handwriting, and very commanding in its solicitation. She craved permission to pay Squire Gage a visit at the Mall, that she might have the privilege of inspecting his princely charities as well as transacting a little business with him; she begged him to set the time and promised that his time would be hers, but suggested that Tuesday, at three o'clock afternoon, would suit her best.

Squire Gage wrote back that he would be highly honored by her ladyship's token of good neighborhood, and by the condescension of her inspection of his poor premises; but he was far from princely in his housekeeping, whether in entertaining strangers or aught else. And because he hesitated to entrap her ladyship's goodness under false pretenses, he must take leave to inform her, lest she should be incorrect in her judgment, that none of his property lay in Tynwald, and that therefore he was not in a condition to vote for her son; nay, in strict honesty he must tell her, at the risk even of losing her esteem, that, if he had been qualified, his sentiments would have constrained him to support the opposite candidate, Mr. Weatherhead.

"The rude old Methodist looks upon me as a liar, and says as much, and not in a very roundabout fashion either," commented Lady Rolle. "I shall lie no more to him, at any rate!"

And she sat down and indited another scrawl, in which she simply made out, in the name of her son, Lord Rolle, a gift in perpetuity, without charge or duty, of a piece of ground in the centre of Sedge Pond, with liberty to build thereon a Methodist chapel and Methodist preacher's house, such as could not be had for love or money nearer than the Mall.

The paper was returned by Lady Rolle's private messenger, with the words "Canceled by mutual consent" written at the end, and with a slip of paper to the effect that Squire Gage was sorry to be compelled to decline her ladyship's liberality, but if he would not sell his political conscience for his own sake, surely her ladyship would not dishonor him, or any Gage of the Mall, by supposing that he should pretend to do it for God's sake.

"What! *does* the crazy old hunks pretend to be as pure as an angel?" cried my lady in a rage. "Folk used to call pretty witty Lucy Nenthorn, at whose feet my Lord Babington laid his coronet, a divine angel, until she took it into her quick head that we were profane, and would have us call her a miserable sinner instead, and then she went off, like Selina Ferrars, as stark staring mad as this man whom she wedded. Well-a-day! they must have made a rare couple, a man and a woman like the rich young man in the parable—only that they did not go away sorrowful, but went and sold all that they had, gave to the poor, and followed their Master as they thought they were bid. Had they their price, I wonder? Were they never sorrowful after that sale? I'll be bound he would swear—Never. But the old fellow is as mad as St. Paul, and we are not many of us called to be saints, any more than angels. What do you say to it, Grand'mère Dupuy?" inquired Lady Rolle in the Shottery Cottage.

"I say that we are called to a higher calling, my lady," answered Grand'mère, unexpectedly. "I read in my Bible, 'Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.'"

"Ah! you are another of the saints," exclaimed Lady Rolle, with a groan; "and, I confess to you frankly, my dear old Granny, that very likely I could not bear you and your extravagant goodness either—though I was once used to it from my dear, great, guileless old archdeacon, but that was an age agone—were it not that you are also French, and have a nice flavor of that saintly woman of the world, De Sevigné. Squire Gage is not at all of my sort, however; and I shall have nothing more to do with him."

Notwithstanding this assertion, before the election was over Lady Rolle found herself in danger of being indebted

to the good offices of Squire Gage without the opportunity of repaying them.

A disorderly rabble was likely to be at Reedham on the day of the poll, vindicating their intuitive apprehension for their champion, and doing him and themselves the greatest disservice in their power by resorting to violence against the castle party, and abusing their constituents. Lady Rolle, forewarned, could of course have procured the presence and protection of a detachment of soldiers from the next garrison town. But her pride revolted at the admission of her weakness in the very stronghold of the Rolles; her native courage rose single-handed to the contest. Like Maria Theresa, she was minded to trust to the mere sight of her, their liege lady, to quell all disturbance. Neither were Lord Rolle and his brother deficient in valor, and its better part, discretion. It seemed to belong to the generation, with all its fearful temptations, that such men should fear nothing. And if they were pelted with dead cats, or even cut by stones, it would afford a little relief to the wearisome chairing and feasting—not an agreeable variety, perhaps, but still it was a change on the programme. And if the brutal rioters should be convicted and brought to justice—if any thing like a murder had come to be committed, and any thing like a hanging of the wretches took place, the suffering and doom would, of course, be their own business and their proper wages, but there would be a little interest and speculation for the witnesses. In the mean time, the Rolles rode with their pencils in their hands, ready to sketch any good effect of bridge or ruin which they might catch, their dice-boxes in their pockets, so that they might throw a cast, and thus pass away an interval.

At this crisis Squire Gage volunteered a courteous, earnest assurance to Lady Rolle that he would come bound for her safety and comfort, as far as his poor means could extend. He would send his son to Reedham on the day of the election, to exert all his family and Methodist interest to keep the peace.

Lady Rolle had again looked in on Grand'mère, and was sitting with her in the arbor when the message reached her.

“Now, I say that Squire Gage is ready to lie like the

rest, in order to keep himself, his son and heir, and his low fanatical body, out of a scrape," cried Lady Rolle; "and the best of it is, what will you bet but that he will fail us at a pinch?"

"I bet not, my lady," answered Grand'mère, with spirit; "but I have so little fear that the good old Squire of the Mall, M. Fléchier's friend and mine, will break his parole, that I engage to be there to see him keep it."

"Done, my dear Goody," said Lady Rolle. So she made it a bargain, for she sought to swell her train by every art and element.

But Grand'mère only went to Reedham in a family party, with Yolande and Monsieur, and, from the windows of a mercer with whom the silk-weavers did business, she saw what took place in a quiet way.

Grand'mère had beheld before now displays of popular feeling, inconsiderate, unprincipled, dangerous, brutal; but never had she witnessed any thing so unblushingly gross as the details of this national ceremony.

There were the men in smock-frocks and great-coats, and the women in rustic hats, torn caps, red mantles, green aprons, all jostling each other, gesticulating, reeling, and rolling in the mire, with their banners, colors, and bludgeons, shouting till they were hoarse, blaspheming, squalling, and even braying.

On the outside was a ragged fringe of rioting and fighting soldiers and sailors who had been just discharged, squalid beggars, and the base scum of jails. Then there were the central figures of the rival candidates, and the gentlemen on each side of the hustings making their speeches, (with the uproar outside for a fitting accompaniment), swaggering, waving their glasses, laughing, yawning, dealing each other ruffianly blows, and exchanging cartels on the spot. There were the sheriff, the attorneys, and the clerks, having wigs, bags, and writs for their proper weapons, pouncing with craft and quibbles, but without disguise, on the voters, and plying them with all sorts of cajoleries and bribes. But like the household at the Mall, the voter's roll included the blind, the lame, the fatuous, even the dead among its members, for there were not wanting brazen perjurors, who were caught holding up their hands and swearing to names the old owners of

which were gone to answer to the roll-call of another assembly. At a conspicuous point was the castle chariot, where my Lady Rolle sat, dominant and unmoved ; and when a scowling face or an insolent finger approached her too closely, she faced it and caused it to shrink back before the sheer haughty majesty of her presence. On the seat opposite Lady Rolle, with their backs to the horses, were Dolly and Milly Rolle, fluttering their ribbons, playing their fans, and tittering ; in the excitement of the moment they hailed their acquaintances in the street and at the windows near them (overwhelming Yolande Dupuy in the process), and never doubted the honor and the profit of the exaltation they conferred. They had no more thought of the mass of their fellow-creatures swarming round them than of the flies which the chariot wheels crushed in the dust. They were more insensible than Black Jasper, who glared about him in the seat with Lady Rolle's Basque, to whom he crept for fellowship and protection, in spite of the jealous, sullen temper of the flute-playing, half savage mountaineer, whom neither the *salons* of Paris nor the gracious wiles of Grand'mère could propitiate and tame.

Grand'mère shut her eyes for a moment, shocked at that Reedham election, which was a grim and a grievous piece of satire for a Christian moralist to study ; not the less grim and grievous that it was lighted up by streaks of splendor and grotesqueness. But the next moment Grand'mère opened her eyes again, and looked abroad resolutely, wistfully, her grey eyes growing larger and larger, more tolerant and more pitiful.

“Galop time !” she murmured and thought, “it is not just to judge the gait by it, not to take as the *bouillon* the mere boiling over of the pot. The pastor is there, though I see him not ; erect as he is, less upright men bow and bend and hide him. There are other honest men, besides the pastor and Squire Gage, in the province—oh yes, hundreds of them, whose honesty will always be honesty, and not politeness, as it too often is. Yes, and their industry is labor, never intrigue. But they strike the clock with their vices, else I should not have to say to myself, Go, old Géneviève, there are dozens of brave, pure Methodists down there unperceived in the *mélée*. Bah ! the vilest sinner there is a brother, whom a true Methodist would own.

Did I not say that the *haute noblesse* have their virtues also ? They all love Madame de Sevigné, and each loves the friend of his heart fervently and faithfully, if they love not each other. For, alas ! they say these poor great Rolles —my lord and my lady, and my lord and my lord's brother—do hate, not love each other, though they hold together when the common cause is in peril. Ah ! well, that is something—the skeleton framework of regard, perhaps. And see, Master George spoke like a man once in his address, though he spoke the most of it so languidly, like a woman. It was—I know not at what, but he looked like a man and a gallant noble at the instant, and all the men on both sides held up their heads and hurrahed at the same time. That was magnanimous—that was fine—a redeeming touch, which showed that they were not quite apes and satyrs. *Morbleu !* probably it was a defiance of us, poor dear French, in polities, though not in fashions, and an allusion to the French frigate on the slippery deck of which the sailor brother of the future member fell. Did these two brothers love each other in life, I wonder ? Fie, fie ! Géneviève, to put so cruel a question. Well understood ! the Rolles are not vindictive ; they are generous enemies to me and mine. At last, and on the whole, one must have much faith to meet such an experience as this at the market cross at Reedham. I am afflicted that I brought the child ; yet, again, to ignore the wrong is not to efface it ; far better to think of curing the mortal malady. So many centuries of Christianity, which was to make the world free indeed, and yet to be no nearer noble patriots, good citizens ! *Miséricorde !* shall it not be better for the Greeks and the Romans, who never heard the name of Christ, than for the French and the English ? What, after all these centuries, no higher motives, no sweeter manners, no gentler tastes ! But it is necessary to watch and pray, that we may be able to tell them better things at Sedge Pond, to cleanse the floors of the ale-house, and to dethrone the beast which reigns there.”

Yolande was standing by the side of Grand'mère, staring aghast, and still only half comprehending what she saw. All at once she blenched, flushed up, and drew back behind her protectress. A hoarser murmur and a rougher surge were rising and spreading over the mob,

and Caleb Gage was visible all at once on foot, conspicuous in the middle of it from his velvet coat, shining buttons, and laced hat. He was alone there, so far as his class and his party were concerned, and should the tiger humor which lurks in every riotous mob forget the merciful, kindly charity of the Mall, the squire's son would be in greater danger than any man or woman present. He was not doing much, only turning a frank, open face in every direction, and elbowing his way here and there, speaking softly a quieting word now and then, and testifying how fully he trusted his neighbor.

While Caleb sought, by means so simple that a child could have used them, to curb the excited passions and calm the troubled spirits around him, an impulse was twice given to the brooding madness and crime which placed the peace-maker first of all in imminent jeopardy. His hat was knocked off by one of the rude and reckless hands always tingling to deal the initiatory blow in a fight—a fellow-hand to those the Gages had filled liberally in their day ; and a watch-word was coined and circulated, red-hot and hissing from the primitive mint, “ Trip up the spy, the turncoat ! ” But before the signal could be followed, and the tumult deepen into an uproar—while the girl whose heart the young man had stolen unawares did not guess by any instinct of woman's love the crisis through which they were passing, and while Grand'mère clasped Yolande's hand and prayed impetuously—Caleb Gage's blue eyes darted glances on every side like lightning, till they fell on welcome, homely features which he knew ; and as he laughed in the forbidding faces of the raging crew who jostled against him, he challenged his man loudly and clearly :

“ You, Toby, I know you wear a plaid night-cap below your fur cap, for I've seen it many a night when we've given you lodgings at the Mall ; lend a hand with your beaver here, till I can reach the mercer's.”

“ Loife and forten, yes, measter, and the night-cap forby,” Toby responded, loyally.

A false demagogue, whose breath was abuse and mockery, foreseeing the effect of the good office, tried to prevent it.

“ You mean vermin ! ” he assailed the grateful Toby, by trade a traveling tailor ; “ didn't he ask you to say your

prayers afore he granted you and your goose a night's lodging?"

"And could I ask him a better thing?" Caleb appealed sharply to his audience; "unless you, masters and mistresses, are all infidels together. If I had asked him to say his prayer to me, or even for me, Tap-room Teddy might have had some cause to find fault."

There came a half-doubtful growl of acquiescence, rising into a louder, more decided growl of condemnation of the men who were molesting one of the Gages of the Mall, who, although they had the misfortune to be gentry, were genuine friends of the people, notwithstanding that they were strait-laced, psalm-singing Methodists. Let every man do what he had a mind to, was the rough and ready gospel of the Reedham election crowd, and it was not altogether un-English, nor altogether untrue, turbid as was its source. So that crisis was safely got over.

Ten minutes later, when the people had time to breathe again, an irregular skirmish of throwing filth and stones, possibly more offensive than formidable, was begun by what might be considered the marauders and skirmishers of both armies. But some gentlemen on the Rolles' side were rash and desperate enough to fire their pistols from a window of the inn, wounding a guilty ringleader and an innocent baby in a hapless woman's arms. On the hitting of the baby there was a roar from the crowd like that of the wind in a hurricane; and a rush so great was made toward Lady Rolle's chariot, that it swayed from side to side like a boat on the waves. The spirited horses struck out wildly; Dolly and Milly Rolle were smitten with senseless consternation, and would have leaped out, to certain destruction, had they not been forcibly held back by friends without. Black Jasper rolled his tongue like a mad dog, but did not attempt to copy his mistresses' example; while his comrade, the Basque, half opened his heavy eyes and mouth with a faint expression of gratification.

Caleb Gage, active and strong, fought his way to the step of the chariot, and stood between Lady Rolle and her assailants, before any gentleman could spring to her aid from the hustings.

But my lady rose to her feet, and exposing herself to friends and foes, turned a grandly firm, white face on them

both. "I command that firing to cease; I shall hold that the next man who fires aims at me. Mob! do you hear that?"

"Ay, ay, we hear!" burst, as if irresistibly, from the mass. "You may be a Jezebel, but you are not the worst of your set, and they shannot make a scapegoat of you." And the fit of fury ebbed as rapidly as it had flowed. Then, taking advantage of its fall, the state of the poll was declared, and the Honorable George Rolle elected and chaired without farther opposition.

"Ah! God be praised, there is one hero!" cried Grandmère, moved beyond control. "Shall we grudge his heroism and disown it because he is nothing to us? We are not so poor and miserable, and we too will be at peace, and claim the blessing of the men of peace."

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE ROLLES AT THE CASTLE.

LADY ROLLE, having seen her son securely established in his hereditary seat, found herself in urgent want of a fresh object to work for, or a new cup and balls to play with. In the dearth of more exciting employments, she became gradually captivated with the dreamy foreign graces of Yolande Dupuy. At length she set her heart on having the girl in her own hands, to mould after her capricious notions, and to show about wherever she went. Such patronage of young girls was then the fashion. My Lady Burlington and another fine lady had already electrified London with the attractions of the Italian girl Violante, and with their fierce contentions as to which of them had the right to set off her fine house with the poor spoiled *protégé*.

Lady Rolle had similar inclinations and ambitions. She would supplement her own ascendancy over the great world, and amuse her own jaded sensations, by producing the dignified Huguenot beauty, and by watching the effect she would produce on the men and women who spent their days in seeking for some new thing, but ended them by flipantly proclaiming the doleful conclusion of Solomon, that

there was nothing new under the sun, with the addition that neither was there any thing high or holy, pure or true. She would see for herself what effect the corruption and infidelity of her world would have on a girl apparently so unworldly in nature and nurture as Yolande, and how far Grand'mère's teaching would enable her devoted pupil to stand the test of temptation? And who knows but such treatment on such a subject would end in developing another unapproachable Delany or De Sevigné? And should this be the result, surely society and posterity would owe gratitude to Lady Rolle for having brought to light, and drawn from a state of cloister-like seclusion, a nature so rich and so calculated to shine and to aid others.

Lady Rolle had a craving appetite to see the fruits of bitter knowledge. But along with this vain, tormenting curiosity, might there not be a better feeling, a yearning of the restless spirit for rest, a desperate impulse to recover what had been lost?

Proud as Lady Rolle was, and in a general way above disguise and subterfuge, she was yet forced to admit the existence of some obstacles to her will in the pursuit of Yolande, and also to acknowledge some obligation to overcome them by lawful effort, some demand for stratagem and wariness in her advance to her goal. The abduction of a French Huguenot girl, for the girl's own good, might not sound a very alarming accusation against a woman of her rank. And she was shielded from some risks by her position as a peeress. But she was too wise to take any step that might lead to unnecessary scandal. Besides, Lady Rolle's fondness for Grand'mère, extremely fanciful as it was at first sight, did not prove on that account incapable of influencing her. So she commenced her operations with wonderful mildness and moderation, setting herself at once to captivate the occupants of the Shottery Cottage.

One individual there, however, resisted all Lady Rolle's superb arts. Grand'mère, Monsieur, Yolande, and even brusque Priscille, succumbed one after another in a greater or less degree. Madame, and Madame alone, though she saw so short a way and with so concentrated a light, stood out, and declared war to the knife against her powerful and insidious antagonist, refusing absolutely to touch her gifts. Grand'mère contemplated the stanchness of her daughter-

in-law with that mixture of reprobation and respect characteristic of the old woman.

Lady Rolle said nothing at first of her intention of carrying off Yolande from what she termed the living burial of a village life, and the wretched company (always excepting Grand'mère) of the refugee family. She did not breathe a whisper of her notion of training and tutoring the girl to become a young woman of the world. The great lady only languished over the impossibility of transplanting Grand'mère to the castle, and bemoaned the form and circumstance of her own high station. She was all for nature herself, but she was one of the *haute noblesse*, and must, therefore, submit to the destiny which had become a second nature to her. But her life was many a day a burden to her up at the castle. Would not Grand'mère allow the *petite* to help her sometimes with her shell-work and embroidery, and keep company with her and her young country cousins Dolly and Milly Rolle, who were not otherwise, and who distressed her often by their bouncing ways, but who meant no harm, and were virtuous young women, to whom she had a mind to do a good turn for the sake of their name and her old friend their father? But indeed to please herself she would far liefer do a good turn to Yolandette. And she would take the greatest care of the dear innocent child, who would be as safe as if she were under lock and key at the castle. And her sons were men of honor, who would hold their mother's protection sacred and sure; and then, too, they had a huge admiration for Madame de Sevigné, and intended a brotherly kindness to Yolande.

Now these persuasions of Lady Rolle, aimed as they were at Grand'mère's weakness, had their due effect. Grand'mère was daring from the absence of suspicion rather than timid from the presence of caution. She tenaciously held to the noble dogma, "To the pure all things are pure." She was to some extent mystified and bewildered between the different customs of France and England. She loved the customs of her dear France, but then she was reasonable and sensible, and was willing that concessions should be made to the standard and practices of the country which had adopted her, and in which her descendants would be naturalized. She had always held it desirable for Yolande that she should have companions of her own age and con-

dition, and had already promoted her grandchild's familiarity with the rector's daughters. She did not think that great people who could be so kind as to entertain such a just preference for Yolande could be very wicked.

It was from no servile homage to rank, then, but rather from the excess of faith and charity, and from the confusion of conflicting impressions, that Grand'mère was led off her feet by my lady. She was not only above every thing mean and sordid, but by temperament was decidedly *romanesque*, and she had at the same time the safeguard of having all her antecedents, traditions, and tendencies thoroughly *bourgeoise* and Huguenot.

As a climax, there was the furor into which Grand'mère had suffered herself to be worked about Madame de Sevigné so that she actually came to see in Lady Rolle, not a woman devoured by ambition, and living in pleasure and self-gratification, at once unstable, relentless, and fickle, but a candid tender-hearted Madame de Sevigné, who, in her compulsory worldliness and parched thirsting after better things, would receive an innocent, devout young girl as a stream in the desert, as an angel of light. What wonder that Grand'mère, in her enthusiasm and her tendency to self-sacrifice, authorized Yolande's going to the castle.

For Monsieur, he promptly enjoined that Yolande should wait on the great lady whenever the great lady wished it; and in France a father's will was always regarded as law.

There remained then only poor Madame in a weak minority. She was violently disgusted at the intercourse between the cottage and the castle, as she had been at that between the cottage and the rectory. And she was too much of a Cassandra to do any thing except to prophesy inevitable evil. She was always barking, but did not bite. Like many violent women, she was undone by her own violence; for, after all, she exerted less rule over her own family than most meek-tempered, quiet-spirited women do. She had no talent for classifying offenses, or for tracing their relative consequences. Rude and blustering, she rolled them all together, and hopelessly massed and confounded them. Her daughter's going to London into the great world might have opened her eyes as with a shock, but Yolande's going a mile's distance to the castle was but another version of the apostasy of her being permitted to visit at the

parsonage. Madame saw in both the same danger to Yolande's state of perfect tutelage and to her French Calvinism; and nothing farther.

So Lady Rolle succeeded in making the first breach in her assault on the stronghold of the Dupuys.

Yolande went up to the castle in the early spring, while the surly east winds were nipping the blood which had its source in hearts that had been accustomed to beat full and free under the warm southern sun. She went before even the primroses, which Grand'mère herself acknowledged were the color and shape of the stars, began to bud in yellow lustre in the miry lanes. Had these fresh and dewy primroses been conveyed to Covent Garden—not the honest market, but the glaring, dishonest threshold of the foot-lights—they would not have undergone so great a transition as was in store for Yolande.

It is hard for us, in these days, to realize the extent of the change. Times are altered, the tone of the world is modified, and over the old hideous heartlessness and infidelity, where they still continue to exist, a decent cloak is drawn.

It was not that poor Yolande became a scared eye-witness of crimes. The boorish folks of Sedge Pond, whose dull imaginations required strong figures to be reflected in their stagnant waters, mumbled of ghastly crimes which had been committed at the castle of the Rolles; but if these sluggish mediums had not returned enlarged and distorted images of the facts, Yolande only saw life at the castle in its normal condition, and that was simply bad.

In fine, Yolande was removed from the Shottery Cottage, where there was suffering for conscience' sake, involving its degree of nobility, and what remained of its lofty principle; where every body "made the amiable" save Madame, and every body else bore with Madame, and recognized that her feverish fretting and gusts of passion had their origin in duty. Even in its outer courts, where its spirit had sustained the greatest eclipse, the Huguenot family retained the lingering stamp of much that was honorable and excellent. But Yolande had been privileged to abide in the inner court, spirit to spirit with the beautiful nature of an old Christian gentlewoman, whose heart had been mellowed, sobered, and rendered sacred by age, and who was at once

high and humble, wise and simple—yet wonderfully penetrating, clear, and resolute, as well as large-minded.

And so with the print of Grand'mère's character impressed upon her, and Grandmère's fragrance hovering about her distinct individuality, and promising for it a benign summer and autumn, Yolande went up to the castle, sharing in the generous, gentle delusion of meeting the representative of Madame de Sevigné. She was something wholly fresh and piquant there. And she thrilled and palpitated, not so much like a young candidate of forgotten chivalry, or an art-student of what was one of art's seasons of enthrallment and degradation, as like a neophyte of the one church invisible, intrepid in the sublime anticipation of saving souls and in the charity which covers a multitude of sins. In the great white castle, with its vast front and its outworks of pillars, she encountered, with only a mile of park between her and the Shottery Cottage, the great castle giants.

We must hear a little more in detail what Yolande went up and met. We may despair of quite understanding the position; at the same time, we ought to thank God that we can no longer breathe so unhallowed an atmosphere.

Yolande found a great, splendid house, swarming with idle retainers and spoiled servants, where there was neither fear of God nor devil, though there was in it a poor, trodden-down clergyman, Mr. Hoadley, who, as domestic chaplain, read prayers and preached when he was requested, just as he would cut up a haunch of venison, or hold a hand at piquet. Cards and dice were not, in the view of the castle grandes, the mere tickets and dominoes with which Monsieur and Grand'mère would wage an elaborate war in order to be social, and to entertain each other. They were the promissory notes and stakes of sums great and small; for gambling was the one common interest inside the castle, as horseflesh was with the men, and, to a certain extent, with the women, outside the castle. No rank of the occupants, no story of the building made any difference. Cards were the main object, and from the great drawing-room down through the servants' hall to the scullery, all was set out for play.

Yolande saw, too, the most senseless waste of victuals, batches of bread, blue and green with mould, being tossed into the red gulfs of the kitchen fire. And what Grand'-

mère would have called “the poor dear innocent pigs,” were fed on roast ~~chicken~~ and *blanc-manger*; while Lord Rolle was in such chronic distress for money, that each rent-day his agent had no choice but to distrain for rent even in the saddest circumstances.

And Yolande saw the company that came to the castle: magnificent fine ladies, only more elaborate, and more countryfied in their magnificence than my lady; and gentlemen of repute, less finished than my lady’s sons, but heartier in their coarseness. And unless the visits chanced to be in the form of morning call, the company uniformly fell into the family ways of gross eating, hard drinking, and high play.

The conversation at the castle exhibited in perfection a dilettantism without either heart or soul, a half real, half feigned foppishness and squeamishness, a fidgety, conceited fondness for spurious art, and such vile insinuations, that it was happily impossible for good people even so much as to comprehend the *double-entendres*. All over the castle such conversation was more or less current, down even to Dolly and Milly Rolle, who attempted to harden themselves in order not to blush at broad inuendoes or wanton insults, and even tried to retail them with their own foolish lips. It must be understood, however, that life at the castle had gone from bad to worse since the rector’s youth, and that, not caring to spend much of his time there in later days, he was uninformed of the extent and the nature of the degeneracy. Had it been otherwise, he would surely not, even in spite of his feudal allegiance and by-gone kindness for my lady, have taken the moths to the candle, and placed his facile daughters in the sounding halls and corridors.

Yolande could not discover, listen how she might, in all the willful trifling, in all the malignant talk misnamed shrewdness, in all the poor faded mimicry of the *naïveté* of Madame de Sevigné, that any man or woman at the castle believed in any thing, or trusted in any body, or had any God in the wide universe but his or her own pampered, disappointed, pigmy self. None of them could look backward to sweet wholesome memories, or forward to brighter, better hopes, but must cleave to and batten in their fool’s paradise.

Brought up in the strictest school of discipline and duty, and as ardently attached to Grand’mère as a lover to his mistress, Yolande was perplexed beyond measure to find that

the great Rolle family had now reached that pitch of reprobateness recorded against the Romans of his time by no less a judge than St. Paul when he said that they were "without natural affection." Lady Rolle had brought herself to look on her son and heir, Lord Rolle, who had been her sucking child, as her rival and enemy; my lord regarded his mother sullenly as an interloper and incubus; and each entertained toward the other jealous suspicion and cruel hostility, which they did not trouble themselves to hide, and which, like consuming lava streams, were continually bursting through the icy coating of their ceremonious politeness.

As to the frank and fond kinship of brothers, it was unknown at the castle. The Honorable George Rolle bore a bitter spite against my lord; while he returned the favor by grudging his cadet every advantage which he could not prevent him from obtaining, and by repaying himself in pinching George so far as he dared in his birthright, and playing him false whenever an opportunity presented itself. The great link between the two brothers was the necessity for combining against the domineering spirit and eccentricities of their mother. What their cunning selfishness told them was a benefit to both, and an aid to their common bent in luxurious effeminacy and savage insensibility, they readily enough combined to gain; but there was no sweet affection, no patience, no trace of real esteem or self-denial in their relationship.

In theory, Yolande went to the castle to lighten the great lady's pomp, strife, and weariness by faith, love, and peace; to nestle near her, look up to her, and wait upon her with such reverential pity and tender devotion that the wasted heart might be won back to God, and to good dispositions and good works.

But in reality Yolande went there to help Dolly and Millie Rolle to keep my lady company. She was seated at the foot of the table or the draughty side of it, and helped last at dinner and supper, along with Mr. Hoadley and Dr. Spiers, the chaplain and the physician. She was expected to withdraw into window recesses and vestibules, or to betake herself to the housekeeper's room, and the society of Mrs. Mann and Mrs. Sally, when more suitable company offered itself.

Yolande found the troops of servants saucy and insolent;

they lied to her, and they attempted to filch from her the few precious things she owned—such as Grand'mère's miniature in enamel, and one of those doves in gold which the Huguenot women substituted for the crosses of the Roman Catholics. This, to the confounded, grieved girl, who had known nothing but the kind scolding, the blunt truthfulness, and the loving care of lynx-eyed Priscille, was in itself a perplexity and a pain.

Mr. Hoadley, in or out of his cassock, and Dr. Spiers in his green spectacles, did not work any harm to Yolande, save what came from the sight of the troubles and hardships which engrossed them. But Dolly and Milly Rolle were now wofully changed toward her. Their capricious friendliness to her had become coldness and dislike; and no wonder, for they were mortally jealous of Yolande's joining them as a companion to my lady. They persecuted her, stealthily and stingingly; they misconstrued every thing she did, every early walk she took in the park, every lily or carnation she sewed in my lady's embroidery, every psalm of Marot's she sung at Lady Rolle's request to lull her asleep. The very details of Yolande's unchanged dress—the long-waisted, sage-colored Lyons silk, and the cap, which was chiefly a bow of ribbon above the roll of hair, so sober and sedate in its one bit of bright color—afforded ground for their raillery. The sisters winked at her, whispered about her, and spoke of her in gibing, bitter speeches. Indeed, they were rapidly advancing to plot her destruction, and to consummate her disgrace and expulsion.

Lord Rolle and his brother were not such strangers to a gentleman's code of honor, worthlessly elastic as it was then, as not to hold their mother's house in some sort a sanctuary to girls like the Rolles of the rectory and Yolande. They only startled and distressed Yolande by calling her to her face "little Dupuy," and saint this and saint that, and by attempting to hoax her as egregiously as they hoaxed the Rolle girls on the last court fashions. Afterward they would laugh inordinately in spite of their habitual languor, and proclaim the girl's credulity in every company when the imposture was detected. They affronted the shy French girl by, at one moment, claiming small services at her hand, and by carelessly neglecting to pay her small services in return at the next. They horrified her by asking her to

remember them in her prayers, and by affording the clearest evidence that they were scoffing at all prayer, and at the great Prayer Hearer.

So there remained only Lady Rolle to atone for these outrages on Yolande's principles and feelings; but that unhappy, infatuated woman, after having with the utmost solicitude enticed and decoyed Grand'mère's child into her power with some faint thought of, and longing after, better things, only made matters worse. In her country-house, away from such distractions as she clamored for, and with her vices and her tyranny goading what was capricious in her, her revengeful excesses broke out in their native deformity.

The rectory girls could look on at my lady's gluttony and its appropriate qualifications of doses and drops, and her furious card-playing. They could listen to her conversation when it waxed most scurrilous. Nay, left to themselves, they would learn to fish for tidbits, to borrow Mrs. Sally's drops in order to comfort their own oppressed stomachs, to stake their last half-guinea of pocket-money, and to withdraw into retirement, when they could be spared, to employ their time in vain attempts at concocting the washes and paints of a fine lady. They could even harden themselves to endure taunts and abuse, when Lady Rolle, who with all her knowledge and high breeding was more ignorant than a savage of the obligations of hospitality, turned upon them in sheer weariness and frowardness. They could think it all made up by the honor of appearing in public as Lady Rolle's kinswomen, by receiving copies of the fashions from her maid, or a set of ribbons, or "a head," or a habit, from her scornful prodigality.

Yolande Dupuy bore all this for three days and nights, and on the fourth morning she rose before it was break of day and fled back to the Shottery Cottage for the life of her soul.

She appeared like a ghost in Grand'mère's room as the old woman, in her *pèlisse à capuchon*, was placidly watching her morning fire in a braiser on a tripod, and perhaps pensively wondering whether her child, rising to the splendor of such a life as that of Marley or Chantilly, was at that moment donning her armor and unfurling her banner faithfully, like another Pucelle; or whether she was reading her Huguenot lesson, which had been oftener read in cel-

lars and garrets, in prisons and marshes, than in halls and castles.

"Grand'mère, take me into shelter again," Yolande began to implore in disjointed petitions. "The world is too much for me. But I know well what you will say: 'Judge not, presumptuous one; are there not seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal! And how will the good salt the earth, if they dwell for their own profit and pleasure in the desert?' There are no retreats for the Huguenots. I know it well. But *ma mère*, I am a silly, feeble child, and not a wise, valiant woman; I dare not longer abide in Sodom. Ah! pardon me, pardon me, I did not mean to judge and condemn. Mamma had reason to fear for me. If it has not made me wicked, it has tortured me, and shaken my faith in God and man. It is necessary that I say this, and then I will be deaf and dumb; for I did not go up among the strange quality at the castle, who are good to you, and who thought to be good to us, to be a spy and a traitress in the camp. But what will you? I should love better to be the dogs of the gentlemen than of the dame; for the sacrilegious men can be more just than the great lady, though, alas! she loathes herself above all in the world."

"I beat my breast, I tear my grey hairs, I die with shame for my folly!" And Grand'mère fell back, almost suiting the action to the word. "Hein! what is the price of my grey hairs, that I should put them in the panier? Is the time come when the child shall lead the lion, and the lamb put its hand on the cockatrice's den, without mortal injury? What are to me the risks and the errors of Madame de Sevigné? Away with her! she is at home; her body sleeps, these fifty years, in the vault of her chapel, her spirit is with her God. And it is for her phantom, her shadow, that I expose my little daughter, the daughter of my son. I have been a weak, vain old sinner to venture Yolande where I could not go and spy the land for her. She scorns the spies in her innocence; but there are righteous spies, as there are righteous executioners. The punishment is my portion, my desert; let me only suffer it. Grant, good Lord, that it be to me alone; as for this sheep, save that she is of my house, and the ewe lamb of my old age, and hath obeyed me, what hath she done? And the fine lady, whose impulses were not all ignoble I believe, the unhappy woman who has work-

ed nothing but mischief—shall we not pray for her also, that there may be room found for her repentance—we who so much need repentance ourselves?"

"Grand'mère," said Yolande, hanging her head and speaking below her breath, "why is it that the men and the women for whom our Saviour died are left to believe nothing, to hope for nothing and care for nothing, like these mocking gentlemen and that poor raging lady?"

"It is a mystery," answered Grand'mère, solemnly and pitifully; "and it is the more awful that they have willfully and desperately shut themselves out. But the hand of the Lord can burst even their locks and bars, and show them a grand contrast—the twelve gates of heaven, which are not shut either by day or by night, because there is no night there."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

HIS REVERENCE MR. HOADLEY AND HIS HONOR MR. LUSHINGTON.

YOLANDE's flight from the castle was followed by no domestic results beyond the penitence of Grand'mère. Monsieur was at the time absent on one of his periodical visits to London: and as for Madame, she did not deign to acknowledge the return of the wanderer by any thing farther than—

"Child, you are come back; you did not find it so good to be wrapped up in furs and fed on *blanc-manger* without the blessing of the Lord. For that you may thank your Huguenot ancestors, your catechism, your Grand'mère and me, who have taught you better."

Then she retired into her closet and thanked God with passionate fervor for her daughter's escape from the snare of the fowler.

Priscille only limped grumbly after Ma'mselle, who had come back as white as a jasmine for all her feasting. What chiefly vexed her now that Yolande had returned was, that the clear-starched neckerchiefs and aprons she had got up with so much care that Ma'mselle might not be behind the rectory girls, had been unused and wasted, and not only

that, but she was ready to go bound that her work had been lost, or lent to these very madams. There was not a whisper of Ma'mselle's having been plagued out of her life by the admiration of the Mohocks of fine gentlemen, though Priscille had no doubt it was from them that Yolande had run away. It served the cocks of the quality right, she thought, to have their combs cut a bit. Indeed Priscille would have thought herself indemnified for her trouble if she had but heard the fine compliments which my lord and his set must have paid Ma'mselle, and the splendid offers of carriages and six, and marriages in Fleet Street, which they must have been driven to make her. She would then have had the satisfaction of telling the girl that they were rank lies and base plots. And although she could not tell whence was to come Ma'mselle's share in the nettle-soup and gilt chicken that day, she looked straighter forward out of her near-set eyes than she had lately done, and thought, without admitting it to herself, that Madame was like herself again, and would not any longer pine away in her brightness and sweetness. Having now recovered her little bird, to incline its head and trill fitfully in its pensive, intensely-earnest youth, among the ass's pepper and spiked lavender of her garden, Priscille felt that Grand'mère would live twenty years longer. The Shottery Cottage was more like itself to Priscille again, with youth in all its inexperience and impatience, going about finding fault, wondering why wrong existed, and when it would be righted, and indeed making farther wrong by its rash enthusiasm and half-frantic efforts at the world's reformation. Gruff, practical Priscille would do just as she had done before. She would scold, turn into derision, and lay up and cherish in her heart the waywardness of her young mistress. And so she resumed the charge of Yolande's little wardrobe, and beseeched and bullied Grand'mère for the daintiest fripe in her cupboards for Ma'mselle's bread.

But if there were no results at the cottage, there certainly were at the castle. Even before my lady, a little stunned with incredulity at the independence and ingratitude of her *protégée*, had swiftly recovered herself, and before Lord Rolle and the honorable George had looked up from their study of bric-à-brac and heraldry, basset and ombre, two emissaries arrived at the Shottery Cottage to learn what

mischief was in the wind, and to give Mademoiselle Dupuy and her friends a more or less disinterested hint in time.

The first-comer was my lord's chaplain, Mr. Hoadley, who looked up a quotation or a learned authority, rode a spare hunter, and took a hand in a round game, as well as said grace when he was allowed, and read the service on a ~~rainy~~ Sunday, or on a morning or evening when it pleased my lady to get out of bed, or go to it, with the blessing of the Church upon her head. When Mr. Hoadley was out of his cassock he was no more like a clergyman than Lord Rolle, and he was in reality what the dregs of his private conscience and the remains of public decency left him. He was a man under thirty years of age, was dressed in a shabby brocade coat, with shorts and rolled stockings, and the ordinary triangular little hat. His face, which was clean shaven, would not have been ill-looking, if it had only been as open and clear as it was soft and delicate. He entered the women's room at the Shottery Cottage, with a fine show of conceit and affectation, and a well got-up strut and ogle, after having himself been squinted at disparagingly by Priscille, all the way from the garden gate. With the spasmodic effort of a man by nature shy, and accustomed to be put down, he announced that he was come to wait upon Mademoiselle Dupuy, and pay his humble respects to her and any of her family who might be at home, and to ask, in the name of all that was prudent, why she had bolted from my lady's gracious protection.

Goaded out of her self-conscious reserve, Yolande answered, "I have my reasons, which I am sure you could not comprehend, Mr. Hoadley. Pardon me; I know quite well what I am about. Have the goodness to render my duty to my lady, and tell her that I will always do what she wishes in the embroidery and the psalms here, but that I will never return to the castle."

His reverence was so unclerical as to whistle a bar of "Nancy Dawson" at Yolande's answer, and so unmanly as not to pay the smallest heed to it.

"What do you say to the chit's contumacy, madam?" He addressed Yolande's mother, who was scowling at him with a fierceness, compared with which Priscille's squint was mild and kindly.

"I say that my daughter shall not return to the habita-

tion of wickedness and idolatry, unless she have a desire to make a holy triad with Mesdames Delilah and Jezebel," returned Madame, with the air of having triumphantly disposed of her adversary.

"Marry, come up!" exclaimed the self-constituted ambassador, by no means discomfited by the attack, effeminate and irritable though he was. Madame's passion, as was its wont, had outshot its mark and rebounded with the baffled absurdity of a spent ball. "Mademoiselle was so obliging as to tell me that I do not comprehend the mighty offense; and truly I do not. I am such a poor creature in my good nature that I could not help looking in upon you to warn you that if a nest of foreigners persist in being humorsome to my worshipful patrons, they may find themselves turned adrift without being fledged; that is all. And methought you French were more attentive to the opinions of your priests, Catholic and Protestant, than our English are to us."

With that Grand'mère rose, and with all the dignity of her years and experience, courtesied to the young man in such a manner as forced him to rise up from where he had been lolling upon the settee, to make her a sprawling bow in return.

"Yes," said Grand'mère, "we honor our pastors, and that is well, for they are the shepherds and we the sheep; and it is true that our pastors have not failed in following the Good Shepherd. Monsieur must at least have heard that our pastors have died with their sheep, and have sealed their 'I believe' with their blood. But, Yolande, why did you not tell us that Monsieur was a priest? How good it is of Monsieur to come out after a little strange lamb as he has done. Philippine, there is a sleeve of the coat of a true pastor. Not true, say you? Can you not see it, my love, although it is not the wing of a Geneva cloak."

"Eh?" questioned Philippine, gloomily. "In a *flandrin*, a *damoiseau*? Believe it not, *ma mère*; there is a serpent hid under the rock."

"Never mind her, Monsieur," explained Grand'mère, placidly, "she is honorable to the tips of her fingers; and if she can not see the comparison she will not say she sees it, and so she scolds, but her scolding is wholesome as the bracing wind. It is for me to explain and thank you, Monsieur my

pastor, when we can offer you no recompense, for Yolandette is nobody—a rude lamb who bounds to her dam, shaking her tail and bleating pitifully. Ah! my young pastor, Yolande is but a silly lamb, only wise in knowing that in her simplicity and weakness she might stray quite out of the fold. She is not, like you, a consecrated, ordained young servant of God, to resist and rebuke evil and dwell among it unscathed; and so she beats a retreat, and lets her just fears chase her out of that Vanity Fair of which your great English Fénelon, Bunyan, has written so well. Is it not so, Monsieur? And are you not proud of your Pilgrim?"

Mr. Hoadley stared at Grand'mère, his hollow black eyes wide and his mouth open.

"Consider what unpardonable wrong I should do," continued Grand'mère, "what giddiness and folly an old woman of fourscore years would be guilty of, if I sent her alone with her roll back to the Vanity Fair from which her ancestors a century ago fought their way in blood and fire. Consider it, my generous young pastor, you who had some care for the strange lamb. I am sure that you will be glad the scared little creature had the discretion left to take opportunity by the forelock and leap the city wall, and that you will no longer seek to catch her and carry her back."

"Sure, you mock me, madam," Mr. Hoadley stammered.

"Monsieur le Pasteur!" exclaimed Grand'mère, in unmistakable surprise and pain, and for the first time taking a step back from the visitor.

"Then what do you take me for?" he inquired hastily.

"For a young Timothy, please God," declared Grand'mère, wistfully; and then she added, in a lower tone and with exquisite tenderness, "Had he not his youth, which he was to permit no man to despise? Ah! that had been a difficult charge had he not been the scholar of an inspired sage. He had his infirmities of body, too, and I fear that you suffer also, my son."

"I suffer in my soul and conscience," cried the young man with trembling, passionate lips. "I am no such vile hypocrite as to lend myself to an act of imposture. Mademoiselle here must have told you that I am a miserable wretch, a priest all but forsworn; and wherefore do you

thus convict and crush me with the shame of a false character?"

"It rests with you if it be false," remonstrated Grand'mère, gently. "Go, you came not to me with a false purpose," she argued, with penetrating charity in her motherly grey eyes.

"No, upon my life!" he said, eagerly confirming her assertion. "I had an honest thought of doing a good turn to the modest Mademoiselle, who is very different from the foreign gentry I have known at the castle. God help me, for I might have seen farther. But I say now you are perfectly right, Madame. Keep your innocent maiden out of the garish light yonder, out of the awful selfishness and desperation, though you should have to lock her up with ten locks and keys, and even though my lady should turn you out of house and hold. She is a bountiful patroness, but her 'tender mercies are cruel,'" he ended, with a spasm on his white face, as he took up his little hat.

But Grand'mère, by her sympathetic words and soft questions, constrained him to sit down again, and caused him to cover his face with his hands, and to betray his black eyes moist as well as hollow when he removed his fingers. He kissed Grand'mère's hand; the wonder was that he did not fall on his knees before her.

Mr. Hoadley's greatest sin was that he was a moral coward; and he was no worse than his class, except that such cowardice in a man who held his office was more degrading than in any other. His life had been a hard and corrupting one, and there was even some room for marvel in the fact that he had been saved from utter destruction and downright infidelity. A clever but weakly excitable man, he was very ready to receive impressions and take on hues from the men and women around him. Curbed and generally kept down, on the smallest encouragement he fell naturally into the noisy candor of the period. He reproached himself in presence of the three women, two of whom had never seen his face before; he confessed his errors; and he told his history.

But after all it was only to one benevolent, godly old women—reverent in her age, godliness, and benevolence—that Mr. Hoadley spoke. Madame Dupuy did not understand more than one out of a dozen words he said, so dis-

missing him from her thoughts she wove her lace and returned to her habitual meditated refrain on the sorrows of the Huguenots and the hardened worldliness of Monsieur. Yolande, after Mr. Hoadley's first personal allusions were made, slipped out of the room, and took refuge with grumbling Priscille, feeling no regret for the loss of a tale which she was tempted to undervalue. Pity is akin to scorn as well as to another quality; and Mr. Hoadley was too mendacious in soliciting pity, and too much occupied with his own troubles, to attract either light or lofty-hearted girls. Only Grand'mère listened to his narrative with unwearied patience, relieved by occasional pinches of Spanish snuff. In meeting his avowals, she guarded his self-respect more jealously than he himself did, and soothed his hurt feelings and wounded vanity while she faithfully probed his conscience and enjoined amendment at any cost.

Mr. Hoadley, in place of being related to the famous bishop of the name, was the son of a poor clergyman who had barely managed to educate his son for the Church. Just as his university career was ended and he had taken orders, his father died, leaving a widow dependent on her son's exertions. There were but three fields open for him—to starve in a Grub Street garret, to be an usher in a school, or a chaplain in a great family. Mr. Hoadley chose the latter, as affording most remuneration for the present, and the greatest hope of preferment for the future. When he had subjected himself to this bondage, and lived long enough in it not only for the iron to enter his soul, but to become comparatively disqualified for any other mode of life, his mother, whose comfort had influenced him in his choice, died and left him alone in the world. He was neither a sot nor a confirmed gambler; he was a passive witness of his master's delinquencies, but not yet an active promoter of them. This was the most favorable account which could be given of him; all his higher aspirations, his purer hopes, had shrunk and withered, and were near to perishing, when he encountered Grand'mère.

“I say nothing of the glory of God and the usefulness to man of your choice, my pastor and son,” said Grand'mère, with her usual large and merciful allowances, “because you say you did it to provide for your mother; and is it not said that he who provideth not for his own house is worse than

an infidel? But in the name of God what hinders you now from leaving that unhappy castle, and shaking the dust from off your feet against it?"

Grand'mère paused, but getting no reply she proceeded: "The pastors of the Huguenots quitted their father-land and the scenes of their youth, they broke the dearest ties and wandered abroad to struggle for daily bread under a foreign sky; or they stayed and ministered in their own France, and were imprisoned, fined, led to the halter, or shot in the market-place. Ah! Monsieur, if it is great and noble in any man, assuredly it is the prerogative of the priest to be great in suffering, that he may help the people—to descend into the pit himself, if so be he may rescue one of them."

"But I am a poor, sneaking, despicable fellow," lamented Mr. Hoadley. "I am not like your stern and saintly Huguenot pastors, reared in the wilds to the rattle of the dragon-nades I read of when a boy. Would to God I were a boy again, madame, to begin life anew! But I have lain in the lap of luxury, and am as full of disgusts and aversions as Rolle, and as full of vapors and nerves as my lady. I'll lay you a bet my mind is going. I could not study an hour on a stretch for a pension. Certainly my health is broken; I had an attack of ague in the fall, and at intervals I shake and sweat by turns to this hour."

Grand'mère looked into the worn face, and some tears fell quietly from her old eyes.

"I dare not go up to London to rot in the Bench or the Marshalsea, or fill a cell in Bedlam. I am not free from scots as it is, and the Reedham Jail or a neighboring ditch may serve my turn. I have made my bed, and I must lie upon it; but is there no hope here, dearest madame? Is there no atonement for such a caitiff as I am?"

Grand'mère clasped the young pastor's thin hands, kissed him on the forehead, and told him of hundreds and thousands of her persuasion in France whom De Missy, Bourdillon, above all Saurin, had reproached and condemned for not coming out of the country, proclaiming their creed, and casting in their lot with the exiles. But for herself—she did not know—she was a simple old woman, only she trusted that her God would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. She had read of lifting up the hands which hang down, and strengthening the feeble

knees. She thought if a situation were not morally wrong in itself, the wrong in it belonged chiefly, if not entirely, to the wrong-doer. Great loss might be suffered—greater in the main and in the end than any loss which could not be contemplated or consented to, in abandoning the situation; but she could never, never think it would be perdition. Salvation might be as by fire to such as escaped from dangers like these, but she fully believed it would be salvation. Truly, there was work for a pastor in the castle; and if he wrestled and resisted, he might do something to bear a good testimony, and to stem the tide of evil. But if he were dismissed? Ah! well, perhaps that would be the best thing that could happen him, and the Lord would be his provider. She counseled him to consult the pastor of Sedge Pond, and to be guided by him, his superior according to the government of his Church, notwithstanding that the young man shrank from Mr. Philip's searching scrutiny and severe reprimand. Finally, Mr. Hoadley and Grand'mère parted friends.

Thus it came about that Mr. Hoadley was constantly dropping into the Shottery Cottage, to be entertained with a little chocolate and an unlimited amount of succory water. Being a very excitable man, quick at borrowing and throwing back the characters and tastes of the company that surrounded him, he came to discover that Grand'mère's child, who hardly looked at him, and was very scant in her kindness to him, was not only fair, but "good, and true, and wise," a genuine descendant of Grand'mère's, and fit to be coveted for her own sake, as well as for that of her venerable kinswoman.

Between Mr. Hoadley and the next visitor at the Shottery Cottage there was a great difference, both in the original constitution of the men and in their social position. The second visitor did not wear the coat of a gentleman, and he stood behind Lord Rolle at table, in place of sitting at the foot of it. But it was a grand coat which he wore, and an important station which he occupied. Regarded as "his honor" at Sedge Pond, he was condescending to the farmers and small clergy in the vicinity. He was a man of more substance and consideration than the poor chaplain; and while Lord Rolle would address the latter as Parson Hoadley, or by any other idle, insolent name which came to hand, he never addressed his butler by any term more disrespect-

ful than "my good fellow." Sometimes, in the height of urbanity and affectation, he would even preface a request with "my child." It was said that my lord deigned on occasions to borrow gold guineas from Mr. Lushington, and to accomodate himself with Mr. Lushington's name on paper. Perhaps Mr. Lushington was, on the whole, the most respectable institution at the castle, for he was a man verging on sixty, and had served my lord's father. Nay, he had been born in the Rolles' service, as his father had been before him; and in the midst of the wanton waste and pillage in high places, he did what he could to preserve the honor of the family, and to look after their interest before his own. He was a portly man, who set off his lace, the scarlet of his livery, and his silk stockings, and wore his cauliflower wig when he went abroad. A portly man and a pursy, with a round snub nose, somewhat copper-colored, sharp twinkling eyes, fat cheeks, and a polished ball of a chin; a man bristling over with prejudices, and with choler if these were assailed. Little as they deserved it, he had an immense respect for his family; he called them his, as if he had the onerous task and the great misfortune to be their progenitor. To cover their misdemeanors and vindicate them from reproach and injury, he fumed, stormed, and perspired at every pore; and he happened to have an intense hatred to scarecrows of Jesuitical, papistical French. He bounced right into the parlor at the Shottery Cottage, without heeding the "Tiens! Rabshakeh!" of Madame, and without waiting for the heavy march of Priscille, who stood in awe of him, if she stood in awe of any body. It was not that Mr. Lushington had the most distant wish to recover "my lady's trapesing prodigy; but then what right had she to scud off as if she had taken pisen, when her victuals had been as good as quality junketing?" He himself had filled her glass with such old Bordeaux as he would warrant she had never tasted in her fine France. Yes, she must be rated soundly, for it was not for the honor of the castle to stand such doings. It made him mad to think of such notice being wasted on a slothful outlandish pack, when there were families and families of honest Britons who would have worked hard to deserve it.

Yolande knew that Mr. Lushington was a great authority in the castle, that he was a foe of another calibre from the

chaplain, and that perhaps, she had never seen so magnificent and autocratical a personage in her life as he who now stood there, all swelling in his purple and scarlet. Still, she took his rating bravely.

But though Yolande was brave enough to present a cold, stiff front to the enemy, she did not attempt to defend herself. She no more dreamed of warming, and melting, and making an appeal to the generosity, the fairness, or the humanity of her assailant, than of appealing to one of Lady Rolle's snorting coach-horses, or to a bellowing bull in the park. It was Grand'mère who took rapid measure of Mr. Lushington's massive proportions and made the attack; and she did it with manifest zest and enjoyment, becoming for the nonce more quaintly proverbial, more fluent, more graphic than ever.

“Ça, you will surely not speak to our backs, Maître Bonhomme, and we only three rags of women? You are a brave man. We also know what bravery is. We had our Schomburg, our Ruvigny, and you English heard of them too, and helped yourselves to their bravery at the Boyne and at Oudenarde. And we are all baked with the same flour, though we were from the side of St. Louis. Ah! there is still a quarter of your London which you call Petty France, and what would you do for water-gilding, clock-making, sign-painting, hair-dressing, and perfumery without its inhabitants? What would you do for silk-weaving without Spitalfields? We are not lizards to bask in the sun (if we had the sun to bask in), as you say. We are good citizens, peaceful and diligent. We do not drink, nor do we swear; none of us waylay and stab, save Gardelle and Guisarde, who are the only two miserable criminals among us. You remember all these things at present, and you begin to respect us a little for our patience, our endurance, our ingenuity. All that is true, Maître Lushington, and you comprehend it because you are one of the English who could be as patient and enduring, though not as ingenious, in adversity. You can not save yourselves from a suspicion of esteem, even while you ‘hump! hump!’ and thrust your hands into your breeches’ pockets, while you look at our skips and our shrugs or listen to our chatter.”

“Antic fiddlers, mountebanks!” growled his honor, with a shade of shame on his broad visage.

"Alas! I fear we vex you horribly," continued Grand'mère. "Still, you harbor us, you serve yourselves with us, and, in spite of the national antipathy, you esteem those of the more who have renounced our fatherland for what we us call duty, freedom, and purity. What! we disobeyed our Louis, as you disobeyed your Charles and your James, only we were not fire-eaters; we have not gone above the houses like you. These hands must grow more like claws with emptiness, and redder with desperation, unbound by law or gospel, before they tear down the sacred majesty of kings. It is in the nature of the French, Romanist and Reformed, to be loyal as the lilies are white."

"If you are so loyal, why did not the girl bide in her service?" interposed Mr. Lushington. "A fig for her loyalty, to break the bargain and run off like an ill-doer! The flagons and scones, my lord's and Mr. George's nick-nacks, my lady's rings, are all to the fore"—so he did not mean to bring any accusation on that score.

"My little daughter entered the service of my lady—good," said Grand'mère, emphatically; "she quitted it again without the ceremony of asking leave to do so—bad. Have you a daughter of your own, Maître Lushington?"

The butler shook his ambrosial curls and smiled grimly in the negative. "No, nor ever a dame, I'm thankful to say, mistress."

"Ah, well, I compassionate you," said Grand'mère, throwing in her gracious pity with a wave of her hand. "But you had a good mother once. Suppose she had entered the service of the old seigneur."

"She!" interrupted the butler in a towering passion. "She were a good mother and that bean't a likely or a sightly supposing. Mother were as honest a woman as ever stepped; she could not taste a cool tankard, let alone sack-whey or burnt brandy. She would not have known a card from a wagon-ticket. She could spell a chapter in the Bible, for she was a scholard, but she read nought besides except the tallies and the trades' tokens. My sisters, Cherry and Moll, were such likes. I can tell you, feyther's woman had no trade with the castle."

"And if they had once entered it by one great mistake and misfortune, say you, would you never have forgiven them if they had found their way out again as quickly as possible?"

"I have nought to say in answer to such a question," replied Mr. Lushington, shortly and surlily, after a pause, during which he had fingered a wart on his round chin as if he had meant to pluck it off by main force. "Things are not consorts, as my brother the sailor, who licked the French under the great Admiral Benbow, was wont to say."

"And found them difficult, very difficult, to lick, Maître Lushington," maintained Grand'mère, with imperturbable good-humor. "You will admit that, for the sake of your brother."

"Wounds! you have me there, madame," granted Mr. Lushington, unable to resist making the admission.

"And are there not some things still that Maître Lushington would not give up to his masters—would count more precious than their favor, and which he would not wish to persecute and destroy poor strangers for seeking to spare?"

Mr. Lushington marched out of the Shottery Cottage without another word. He came back again, however, to tell Grand'mère, in his bluff fashion, that nobody from the castle, with his consent, would trouble her on hers.

The first result of this interview was a messenger with his honor's respects and a bunch of English sweet herbs to the old French madam. And this was followed by the same messenger, bearing in succession the same respects, and a string of hog's puddings, a pitcher of clotted cream, and a basket of what were left of the winter's pippins.

Grand'mère met all the respects and the gifts with the most enthusiastic compliments to "the noble donor," her "very excellent and most honorable friend, Maître Lushington," from his "highly obliged and deeply-indebted serviteur, Géneviève Dupuy."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE MAN OF THE WORLD AND THE WOMAN OF THE CLOSET.

MONSIEUR returned to Sedge Pond even more bland and polite than he had set out, expecting to surpass the hopes and desires of his woman. He had brought a top-knot for Yolande; and had procured through a compatriot, not without trouble and expense, a real live orange-tree, grander than

any of the Italian pines and Guernsey lilies of the famous castle gardens, to lend the true French air to Grand'mère's *jardinière*. And he had shown a desire to suit the tastes of each, for he presented to Madame a memoir in which the details of the watch of St. Barthélemy and of the galleys were set down with more ghastly precision than ever. To her such details lent a strong relish to life, keener than Grand'mère's fragrant orange-tree could lend.

And Monsieur, selfish as he was, did not cease to be mindful of the inclinations of his wife, though he received only groans and taunts in return for his little cares. He was by no means deficient in the courtesies and charities of life, but he was inscrutable at once in constitution and conduct, notwithstanding his having been set down as only a shabby, disreputable plotter in the mind of Lady Rolle. He sat in his cabinet and pored over commercial bills and weavers' figures, or he waited on for the mail, overwhelming Mr. Hoadley and Mr. Lushington with civility every time they crossed his path. Yet somehow the poor chaplain and the substantial butler agreed on one point—they both entertained entire distrust of the shallow foreign gentleman.

Monsieur, in the intervals of his absorbing preoccupation, played the lover to Grand'mère (who brightened afresh as a French mother brightens at a French son's redeeming tenderness), treated his wife with *bourgeois* good-breeding and carelessness, and dealt to Yolande a modified version of the same, perhaps with a shade less deference and a shade more interest. Going out one day he chanced to encounter my lady's coach, and lifting his hat clean off his periwig, he first received in return a haughty stare, and then an imperious wave to the coach door, where he stood and conversed for ten minutes.

The effect of that ten minutes conversation was soon manifested. Monsieur returned to the cottage, went up to Yolande, pinched her cheek, and said to her lightly enough—

“What is this, my child? Art thou of years enough to make rules?”

He then announced to Grand'mère and Madame that his daughter was next day to go back to the castle, to the gracious protection of my lady.

“Oh, father! for pity's sake,” plead Yolande, so agitated that her words were nearly inarticulate.

"The affair is settled," he answered her, coolly. "Is not the first principle obedience to parents, my well-instructed *fille*?"

Now, unless in the utmost extremity, Grand'mère shrank from opposing her son. The worldly-minded, cynical, scheming man was so devoted to her, and so fond of her, and Grand'mère's sense of filial duty, like every body else's to whom duty has any meaning, was immoderately high. Grand'mère thought that if she entreated her son he would yield his most fixed determination, his most cherished wish, and even forego his dearest advantage. But just because her influence over Monsieur was unbounded, Grand'mère was loth to exert it even on behalf of her darling. So she endured an agony of doubt while she hung back and let Madame oppose her husband's project. And Madame, who in the moroseness and recklessness of her fierce fanaticism was at last roused to the difference between Yolande's drinking tea and supping at the rectory, and her dining and turning night into day and day into night at the castle, at last spoke her mind :

"My husband," she said, following Monsieur to the threshold of his den, "I must have a word with you. Some words are no more welcome than hail showers in May; but the peach-trees have to bear the one, and the men ought to bear the other."

"A bushel of stones and of words, my good Philippine," acquiesced Monsieur, leading his panting wife jauntily through the narrow lane made by chests and packing boxes.

"Bah! words are easily said," protested the incorrigible woman, as she sat in the leather-covered chair. "It is good deeds which show that men are pious and pure, and not the deeds of a worldling, a traitor, my fine Monsieur."

"If one snivels let him blow his nose," reflected Monsieur, composedly, "but I do not snivel; and, pardon me, but I am astonished that a woman so wise and so diligent, and whom I have the felicity to name my wife, should break in upon business to tell me an incontestable truth; but out of place —without doubt out of place."

So Monsieur calmly assured Madame, as he stood there with one hand in his breast, while with the long yellow fingers of the other he rapped on the table.

"You give up all for business," said Madame hotly.  
"What hours are left you for meditation?"

"Perhaps I believe that my Philippine spends enough of time in that to serve both. Perhaps on Huguenot principles, my dear, I decline to render, even to my wife, an account of my soul, as to a father confessor."

"Father of Yolande!"—Madame apostrophized him in strange dramatic form, not without power in its complete concentrated earnestness—"the castle of the English quality is full of men and women who are bold, corrupt, and wicked!"

"Mother of Yolande, I know all that," answered Monsieur, emphatically; "but a woman of the *haute noblesse* has given me her word of honor that not a hair of the child's head shall be injured, and not a spot shall come upon her reputation."

"I crack my fingers at her ladyship's head, and at her reputation. It is Yolande's faith in God, Monsieur, her immortal soul, that I care for."

But it would have been easier to remove a mountain than to shake Monsieur's philosophy by such blows as these.

"Yes," answered Monsieur, with polite acquiescence, "but her faith to be faith must be tested; her soul if immortal can not be hurt by all the adverse forces in the world. You believe that, Madame? My mother believes it, and you believe too, that the soul is in good keeping. *Fi, fi, donc!* what can the greatest reprobate of a father—and I assure you that there are fathers worse than I—do against the soul of a daughter? Do you ask me to teach you the catechism at this time of day?"

"You can do nothing, nothing against the soul of the child save cast it into the fires of temptation. The good God be praised for that! But you will not do that, my husband?" wept Madame, with a persistency the more pathetic as it softened and waxed more womanly, but never wavered.

"To harden it? Perhaps yes. But I do not deceive you, Philippine, whatever you may think. I am very sorry to refuse you a true request, but I must do it. You oblige me to tell you that you are an enthusiast, a devotee, like the dear old woman. I acknowledge, I appreciate your good intentions, though you are unfortunate enough to have a

sombre humor, my poor, unreasonable Philippine. But never mind. I understand it ; it does not hurt me at all."

So Monsieur encouraged his wife, not unkindly, in the midst of his discipline and defiance.

" Not one of you knows a straw of the world in which you live, the actual world of fools, knaves, despots, and slaves," he went on with the calm assurance of superiority. " You exaggerate horribly, and you teach Yolande to exaggerate. It matters not for you, but it may matter a great deal for her. For the rest, in Catholic families, even the most rigid, where one member has a vocation, that is held to be enough. Must all my women have vocations because we are Huguenots ? The *grande dame* condescends to *fille*, and promises to make her fortune. In the mean time *fille* is fastidious, impertinent, and ungrateful to a marvel. Ah, well ! *fille* must go back, beg my lady's pardon, re-enter her service, and thank me that I say, with the great Henry, ' Paris is worth more than a mass,' to the end of her life."

" And from beyond the tomb ?" questioned Madame, fixedly.

" One can not tell what she will say from beyond the tomb, my dear Madame," Monsieur urged, with the utmost affability.

" My husband, you are a sceptic, a Turk, a heathen !—you are no Huguenot, save as regards your miserable politics."

" I have the honor to salute you, my wife. If you say so, I shall not be so rude as to contradict you ; besides, you ought to know best."

" What devil has you in his hold, that you should send a young girl, even though she were not yours, to destruction ?" urged Madame, goaded to a kind of despair.

" I have never seen the destruction ; and, for one thing, I have no wish to find *fille* promoted to dress St. Catherine's hair."

" Oh ! the equivocation," exclaimed Madame, scornfully ; " there is something more than that."

" There is something more than that," granted Monsieur ; " it is for my well-being and that of my countrymen, for my safety and yours, that I do what is possible, and that Yolandette accepts the *rôle* of Esther without ceremony. What will you do if on next fair-day the peasants cease shouting

at the old women who grin through the horse-collars, and at the dancing bears, and commence to pelt the Shottery Cottage with big stones, and fire *en face*, as the English Jacquerie pelted and fired like demons during the Reedham elections?"

"Let them do so," boasted Madame, proudly. "I have no fear. I give my body with the other bodies to be burned for the good of the souls."

"Truly!" Monsieur submitted mildly; "but though it would be the folly of the cross, against which as a mere mortal I say nothing, it would not be at all pleasant, my Philippine, to a mere mortal. Go! you are an ancient, and I a modern Huguenot, which are quite different things. For me, I think that the Huguenots have already been martyrs enough, for all the harvest they have reaped, or all the effect they have had on the world, to my knowledge."

"Monsieur, I forbid my daughter to go to the castle again!" said Madame, vehemently.

"Madame, I forbid my wife to forbid my child to do what I command. Art thou not my wife?" asked Monsieur, quietly.

"Alas! yes," lamented Madame openly, as incapable of denying a true impeachment as she was of the smallest self-restraint and concealment. "But it is over my body that you will take Yolande from this house."

"By no means. Your body is my property. I shall not let it lie where it will sustain the least damage; you may depend upon that, my excellent Philippine."

Madame had done her little to defend her daughter—there was nothing for it now but that Grand'mère should enter the lists and beseech her son's clemency.

"My son, the little one did not like the castle," whispered the old woman to the mature man hanging over her.

"The little one knows not what is good for her. You have spoiled her, my mother, as you spoiled your doubtful character of a son, before her."

"Say you, then, that I have spoiled you, Hubert?"

"Yes, but by your supreme goodness, my mother."

"The little one fears the great wild castle, Hubert. If you could feel her heart, you would discover that at the thought of the castle it beats like the heart of one of my birds."

“ What ! a poltroon, not a heroine, descended from the mother and you, as well from myself ! How trying ! But we have all sprung from the side of Adam, and that, well understood, explains it all. The women love the beatings of the heart ; one of your birds has said that to my cap. But your heart beats not ; it has too much of the serenity of heaven, good mother. As for that of my Philippine, it beats not neither—not even like a drum or an alarm-clock—no, indeed ! for it bounds and whizzes like a gigantic machine.”

“ Do you count it a great affair for you, my son, that the child of my age should leave me and my white hairs, to keep company with the dissolute quality of the godless world ?”

“ A great affair,” answered Monsieur, very gravely ; “ needs *ma mère* to ask that ? It insures my success in a large venture ; the quality have as much in their power in trade as in other things. You know I am born *bourgeois* and tradesman, and I can not quit trade till I quit life. The patronage of Lady Rolle for Yolande, and through Yolande for the family, for the weavers, the *émigrés*, keeps me in shelter, and gives me confidence—it makes the way easy for me.”

“ My son,” said Grand’mère, softly and sadly, as she turned away her head, “ will you let the way be difficult for my sake ?”

“ That suffices, mother, if you will it. Poor little mother, you know not— But you will it. The darling of Grand’mère stays and marries the Methodist preaching squire, who certainly flings not his handkerchief to her, or the poor dinner-table priest, or else she remains an old maid, to be robbed on all sides, and at last murdered in her bed for her night-cap and the bed-pan, who knows ? Since I came to this England I have seen a servant burned with faggots for the murder of her mistress ; but Yolande is the child of Grand’mère, as I am the child of Grand’mère, and Grand’mère does what she wills with both her children.”

Then Monsieur kissed Grand’mère’s hand and left her, and when he was out of her sight he struck his forehead and gnawed his nails in bitter disappointment and sore vexation.

## CHAPTER XV.

AUDREY THROCKMORTON.

SPRING had come to Sedge Pond at last. But it was not the spring of biting winds, blinding dust, and stinging hail ; it was the spring that is page and usher to the summer, and is so young, tender, and graceful that the man in his strength who is to follow after is hardly thought of or desired. A spring unerringly acknowledged by all living and even by all inanimate things : by the ring-dove and the lapwing, the humble-bee and the dragon-fly ; in the woods now bursting into a flush of delicate green brushed with fruitful brown ; on the Waäste with yellow trails of golden gorse ; by the water with the white ranunculus budding among the still sere flags and rushes. Grand'mère was at once like ring-dove and lapwing, like the hoariest old oak in the castle park and the stiffest old hound in the castle kennel. She had a heart still green, which awoke throbbing obediently to God's signal in the gentle breath of his south wind, as it had done for four-score years. All personal trouble, loss, and infirmity were put on one side as she smiled back to God's smile on the face of the earth, rejoicing like the angels that in spite of confusion, perplexity, sin, suffering, and death, all was indeed very good.

One morning in May, Grand'mère, by the help of Yolande and Madame Rougeole, had made the tour of her alley, her terrace, her fish-pond, and had reached her arbor. Although her voice was cracked she cried out first, and most sweetly, at the sight of dusky violet and dainty jonquille.

It was here in the arbor that Lady Rolle had been so fain to sit with her old friend, to make the illusion of a French pastoral complete. To farther this she would not have minded forcing Yolande into the character of Chloe, and Mr. Hoadley, or any other hired servant, into that of Corydon, so that she might the better trifle with the seasons, and make believe that March was May, even at the risk of consigning poor Grand'mère to the torments of rheumatism, or to a fatal quinsy or pleurisy. My lady would have the small gratifica-

tion of beholding and forming one in such a group, even though it should fall to pieces in her hands and its members should perish in the fragments.

But now May was come, and Grand'mère thought of the great lady pensively, and with many excuses. Of what was frank as the day in Lady Rolle, of her dauntlessness, her stanchness, and her kindness, Grand'mère was fully appreciative. Sitting framed in periwinkle and ivy, she was a picture of faith and meekness, at once balmy and beautiful. But she could not help hankering after the troubled spirit of the great lady, and owning to herself that the vindictive hatred which Yolande's abandonment of the castle, and the Dupuys' rejection of all overtures from the Rolles, had called forth, would have power to wound her in spite of the deep experiences of her long pilgrimage. Still, Lady Rolle's sweeping accusations of heartlessness and insolence, her revilings and her blazing resentment, would cut Grand'mère to the very heart—that heart which age could neither benumb nor petrify. It was only in looking back at the past, with its tribulation ended and its mercy alone undying, that Grand'mère dwelt on the clear, shining hills of Beulah, above the mists of distraction and the thunderbolts of suffering. So she sat and spent a sigh on the great lady, who was immeasurably farther from Madame de Sevigné than was Grand'mère herself, though Grand'mère did not see it.

Without prelude or preparation, without the roll of her chariot wheels, or the tramp of the horses' hoofs, the honeysuckle, periwinkle, and ivy seemed to part as by the wave of Merlin's wand, and my lady, in her superb train, and jewels, and shepherdess's hat, stood in the opening among the soft shadowy leaves, scorching Grand'mère herself a little, and causing Yolande to shrivel up in a corner in something like an ecstasy of dismay, for my lady's face was more than ever like an illuminated mask, behind which burned pride and passion. But, as if wholly to balk anticipation, Lady Rolle showed no sense of the discord between her and the Dupuys, nor did she display any animosity even to the chief culprit, beyond shaking her finger at her, and crying out:

“Child, you've been prodigious naughty! you've almost forced me to have words with my good old Madame. Mighty fine, indeed, when chicks like you are to take alarm, and fly off in a hurry-scurry, without even a note to the old

bird whose cluck has offended their delicate ears. But go to roost, or where you will now, child, for I want to speak to Grand'mère's sober ears alone."

Yolande gladly tripped off to the house, while Lady Rolle sat down beside Grand'mère. She spread herself out on the seat, and put up her fan, but soon forgot it again, and let it drop in her lap in the heat of her conversation :

"Goody, I've come to tell you my story—ladies of quality have told a vast deal worse ones in far more discreditable quarters before now. I wish to enlighten you as to my intentions, that you may no longer thwart me, and stand in a peevish baby's light."

My lady began at the very beginning.

"Ah!" she said, "dear Goody, I guess my early days were very different from yours, and I vow the chances and changes I have known would astonish you. I was motherless as a child in the house of my father, a wild living, broken-down country justice. It was a coarse, rough, riotous life that was led in our house, and our notion of the whole duty of woman was that she should be able to work frills, to keep accounts by an effort of genius, to ride on Dobbin when allowed, and to dance cotillions when possible. One great point in my duty was to keep out of sight and sound of those orgies which left my father so morose and maddened in humor that he would not speak to me for months at a time, but would go about burning the books in his library, and smashing what furniture was still left him to break. When I was an ignorant and helpless, but not overinnocent child of fifteen—and I was never troubled with dullness or innocence—I was called from spelling out a dream-book, and playing with a litter of puppies in the alcove above the bee-hives in the garden, to the side of my father's chair, where, suffering from gout, he sat like a chained bear. I was to be presented to my future husband, Lord Rolle, who had won me, the best part of the prize, and the inheritance of my father's acres, at the hazard-table the previous night. Ah! dear Goody, that was scarcely the way to make a loving pair of us. To this day I confess to you I hate the marriage and the bridegroom, not because my lord was old, and had the worst character, as well as the highest position in the county, not because he was a widower, whose usage of his first wife, according to rumor, had been shame-

ful, but because he had a splay foot, a nose reddened with wine, and was altogether so bloated and ugly, that the children of Sedge Pond screamed when his muff and night-cap appeared at his coach window."

Lady Rolle saw that Grand'mère shuddered at her plain speech, and stopped for a moment, expecting her to speak; but Grand'mère remaining silent, she went on to tell in detail of the wicked mockery of her wooing, and the barbarous persecution which she had had to undergo, and the frantic struggles she had made to free herself.

"I can tell you I nearly destroyed my fine plumes—certainly I soiled them—in my mad struggle to escape. Only bethink you of a mere chick of a girl going disguised as a farm-servant in a wagon to London, where she had not a friend, and where the chances were that, in place of good Samaritans, she would meet with thieves viler than those that plied their trade between Jerusalem and Jericho. But I could dare that and more, good Grand'mère. I was soon followed and brought back, however; and I was so mad with disappointment and vexation that I stuffed my long hair into my throat to make way with myself, till my father had it clipped as bare as shears would clip it, and would not suffer me even to cover the deformity with a wig. And then, when I was so ashamed by the fright they had made me, and by the cackles of the servants about me, that I would have given in to marrying a man with a calf's head, or even the 'Cock Lane Ghost,' my dear old archdeacon came, and would have saved me if I had been to be saved. The archdeacon was my dead mother's uncle, who had lived all his life in the midst of his learning and preferment, in what she called the odor of sanctity. He had heard of my miserable plight, and traveled all the way from his retired, dignified residence in an episcopal town, to interfere in my behalf."

And here the sharp, domineering, high-set voice of Lady Rolle involuntarily softened; for the hardly-used girl, who had lived to have her revenge as a woman, always felt a tender pride when she thought of the good archdeacon's having taken that journey.

"Ah!" said Grand'mere, "there are priests and priests; he must have been a pearl among the dust. You have had some men like that in England too."

"I never met such another as my dear archdeacon," Lady Rolle went on, apparently not noticing Grand'mère's last remark; "he would have sacrificed half his living for me, I do believe. He pledged himself to Lord Rolle as security for the sums my father had lost at the gaming-table. He put the two archconspirators against me to shame by his manliness, his generosity, and his patience; and he carried away his poor prize in triumph, to dwell under the shelter of his honorable roof and his unblemished character."

With vivid power and clearness of recollection, Lady Rolle described to Grand'mère the peaceful life among the Church dignitaries, until she could see the noble cathedral aisles, handed down from other ages, and hear the solemn chanting and the sweet singing of the evening hymn—the women at their work-tables, and the men at their side reading aloud, and among them, like a branded sheep, the young girl with the bare clipped head.

"But it was not to be, Grand'mère," Lady Rolle informed her listener, with a look of haunting remorse, which was very different from repentance; "I tired of being good in no time. I was not pretty behaved, either by nature or education; I believe badness was in my blood, and at last the seven devils so got possession of me, that I began to hate the quiet women and the sober men, and even the very scent of the lavender."

"Oh!" said Grand'mère, unconsciously, as she sighed and looked, if possible, more pitifully at Lady Rolle.

"But yes, that is plain truth, I hate the very scent of lavender, for the archdeacon was very fond of lavender, like that in your window; and I vow a waft of it comes across me strangely to this day. He grew great beds of it under the bow-windows, and it was always associated in my mind with the dullness of the place, which I soon came to hate even more than I hated Lord Rolle and the evil odor of sin and violence. What did I do, quotha? I gave my worshipful father to know that I had grown a good girl in the good company I had kept, and was ready to do his bidding! And I let the archdeacon learn what a thankful task it was to attempt the reformation of a sinner. So the old man, mazed, sick, and disappointed, bowed his head which was as white as yours, Grand'mère; but he could not persist in interfering to prevent a dutiful daughter's obey-

ing her father when she was so minded. And he did not reproach me, though he would not marry me to my lord, and set his hand to the deed. A bishop of Lady Yarmouth's throning did me that service. Well-a-day, I had my fill of stir and noise, feasting and brawling, and was able to tell how much worse was a brutal tyrant of a husband than a tyrant of a father."

Whether or not Lord Rolle had beaten his first wife black and blue like a butcher, he had certainly dragged his second wife out of bed by the hair of her head, and had caused her to stand—her teeth chattering with cold, and her limbs ready to sink with weariness—from the dead of the night to the broad day by the fauteuil to which he had recourse when he could not coax or compel sleep, and all out of the sheerest wantonness. And he had grudged my lady her pocket-money, her clothes, and even her food, when his low niggardly fit succeeded to his prodigal one.

Lord Rolle had insulted his wife equally by his infidelity and his jealousy.

"And yet, and yet"—my lady suddenly stopped in her vehement recital of unsurpassed wrongs to look Grand'mère in the face with her native sincerity, and to say regretfully—"it was not always heathendom in our house; we were not always tormenting each other like savages. My lord, laid down with the small-pox, was crying what would become of him, for his very servants would no longer put a cup of cold water into his hand, and I said, 'I will, my lord;' and I stayed with him night and day, and risked my life, and what I cared more for than it, Madame, you may believe it—my beauty, which all the fools raved about, and hundreds mobbed my chair to catch a glimpse of."

"My lady, you did well—you did well in that," said Grand'mère; "and surely that trial and that tendance made a closer bond between you?"

"You shall hear," said Lady Rolle. "I was spared the small-pox, and my lord recovered, and begged my pardon on his bended knees the first time he could go down on them. He swore never to abuse me again, and he kept his word—till the illness was six months out of his head, and I had provoked him beyond measure. Yes, we had our chances, if we had been resolved to be good, and our blood had not been corrupt. Then Rolle was borne, a cross and

a plague from his birth—and my lord began to fret and pester me with care for his heir, which came ill off his hand, that had not been overkind to his former children. Why, what now, Grand'mère? What ails you?" she interjected sharply, for Grand'mère had involuntarily held up her pure, tender hands. "You need not cry out. It was in Paris that I picked up the charming plan your French madames followed—that of banishing their sprigs from their hotels to the cottages of peasant women who were fit to rear them, and who could spare time to look after them, divine Nature being their best mother—that was the jargon—and no more trouble with the brats was given to the mothers in the rank above being mothers, till the children were old enough to be amusing, if that ever happened, or till they wanted to be taught the manners of ladies and gentlemen. Our men sometimes professed to like the little ladies as well as their dogs; but I never heard of them caring for the little lords. And if they left that fancy to the women, we certainly did not take it up, as we did rock crystal vases and cream-ware tea-pots. I protest I found the French fashion the most natural in the world, and I did what I could to bring it into vogue, and to get my lord to endure it."

"Ah! how the miserable French dames and you stripped yourselves of the crown of your womanhood," said Grand'mère, bearing open and pitying testimony to her opposite experience. Then she uttered a passionate apostrophe—"O Lord! Thou knowest that Thou loadedst me with mercies more than my tongue could tell, and addest but a few numbered chastisements; but the blessings which made my tongue sing for joy when I was a young woman, and made me young again when I was grown old and my arms were waxing empty, were when I held my Hubert upon my knees, and when the women said to me as they said to Naomi of old, 'There is a daughter born to Génievive,' and I took Yolande and laid her in my arms and became a nurse to her."

"Yes, yes," nodded her ladyship in acquiescence, "I said at the first my life had been mighty unlike yours, Grand'mère, but I have known solitude as well as you. When Lord Rolle was at last struck with his death-blow, he took me out of the world and shut me up with him in the castle. And I can tell you his death was like a new life

to me, for it was an unmistakable relief and restoration of liberty and personal safety."

According to herself, Lady Rolle had made the most of it, after the fashion of King Solomon. She too had reigned like a queen for a season, had said to herself, "Lo, I am come to great estate," and in her goodliness of person, in her wit, rank, and wealth, had given her heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. She too had made her great works, builded her houses, got her servants, her men-singers and her women-singers, and was great and increased more than all that were before her, and whatsoever her eyes desired she kept not from them, and withheld not her heart from any joy. With the same inevitable result, too, she had looked at last on all the works that her hands had wrought, and on the labor that she had labored to do, and came now and told of it in the spring garden. And her hearer was an aged widow, who had been oppressed and afflicted, who had been brought up in the wilderness, and was to make her grave among strangers, and who was yet sunning herself in the light of God's bounty and faithfulness, and taking pleasure in the daisies, the lambs, and her child Yolande, and thinking pleasantly of the heaven where the river was a water of life, the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations, and where there was a lamb like as it had been slain. And behold that other woman, forty years younger, who had dwelt among her own people, with her very sons in their manhood dependent upon her power, and hardly yet past the zenith of her splendor, come out of her way to tell Grand'mère that "all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and that there was no profit under the sun."

And the particular vanity under which my lady was now writhing had its root in him who should have been the beginning of her strength and the excellency of her dignity, and of whom, in their mutual failure, she spoke with her face growing livid. She complained bitterly of the trifling character of her eldest son.

"He is so engrossed in his selfish enjoyments—in his horse, his betting, his gambling, and his pictures, that he has never had a thought to spare even for his brothers, not to speak of his mother," she said. "He has never had any consideration for me, though I have taken care that he has

not been able to afford to quarrel with me. But now he is proceeding to crown all his evil doings, and is laying himself out maliciously and with deep design to humble me; and you know, Grand'mère, it is hard to be humbled by one's own son. But you have been happier; you don't know what that is, my good old soul."

"It is dark in some corners though the sun shines," said Grand'mère, "but it is a heavy burden to the mother's heart to be shut out from the son's."

"And the worst of it is," Lady Rolle went on, intent on her own grievances, "Rolle will never marry, he is too much of a *petit-maître*, a man about town; he could not suffer the restraint, the clog it would be upon his actions. Though he is selfish, and idle, and sneering, he can enjoy good-fellowship, and is welcome wherever he goes. So you see, good mother, it is the more necessary that George should marry. He would have done it ere now, dangler and shuffler though he be, if I had not stood in the way. You must know that he went and took a fancy to one of the Leicestershire Lowndeses, and would have been off and married her all in a breath, had I not stopped all that very quickly."

"And do you not believe it is well for the young folks to marry?" asked Grand'mère with all her simple earnestness.

"Ah! yes surely," said my lady, "but we have learned, among other things from France, that the parents should have some say in that matter. I have an old score against these Lowndeses, and that's not the way I wish to clear it off. The mother of Gatty Lowndes once slandered and injured me, and my son shall not marry Gatty Lowndes, even though she was fairer than I was, a greater fortune, and in every other respect a vast deal too good for him. I tell you I would sooner give him over to the bailiffs; for I might do the minx an injury if she were so silly as to come within my reach. Rolle knew my mind about that too, and yet he had the face to go and be a party to it secretly, in order to punish and affront his own mother. And they have laid a deep scheme. The Lowndeses are at Tunbridge, and Rolle has taken rooms for himself on the Parade there, and he wishes George to join him, though in general the one suits the other very much as my cat Fatima suits

the dog Fluff. But I smelled the rat, and I shall yet get the better of both the wretches ; I shall see them undone at any sacrifice, even if I have to marry George to a ballet-dancer or the daughter of a chimney-sweep."

"Ah ! but surely they will listen to their mother's word at the last, to save her from pain," said Grand'mère, in a hopeful tone.

"They will listen when they are outwitted and befooled," said Lady Rolle ; "but you must aid me in this, Grand'mère, and lend me Miss Pendry ; it would be no loss to you to oblige me in this business. George often noticed little Dupuy, and in his own lazy way spoke of her approvingly. He was greatly tickled by her running away, and even wished that he might catch her and tame her. But if Yolande were carried to the Wells—as I would do with your consent—a truce to your thanks—and brought into contact with George in private, and at the rooms, in such a way as would not be the least ungenteel to the girl, George, who is so vain that any body could flatter his vanity to the top of his bent, might be fooled into the rash and reckless step of marrying an obscure girl, if she played her cards well. And I myself would teach the chit how to do this ; while all the time George would judge, as he had every reason, that his mother would be furious at the *mésalliance*. And I confess to you, Grand'mère, I have always lived in dread of such a marriage by means of a curtain ring, and Hoadley or some hedge priest. The marriage once over, however, Rolle would be got the better of ; Gatty Lowndes would be thrown out, and Yolande Dupuy would be young Mistress Rolle—Lady Rolle, in her turn ; and not even her present ladyship's self, however much she might regret her desperate quits, would be able to tamper with them."

"Madam!"—gasped Grand'mère, flushing with the scant blood of fourscore, and hot and trembling even in the fresh spring day among her flowers and leaves—"is thy servant a dog, that she should do such a thing?"

"But, my dear old woman, you are clean mistaken," argued Lady Rolle, mystified, with all her quick wit, at the quiver of indignation with which her condescension was received, and not refraining from stamping her foot at such an unexpected obstacle to her mad will. "The child, as one of us, would be completely sheltered from blame and

exposure. The fact is, madam, when we can not get rid of her, we must make the best of her. I dare say I should be forced to do as much in the end by Gatty Lowndes, supposing I could not shake her off, and if I did not pinch her black and blue, or push her down stairs on our first introduction—and I am only a woman—and Rolle himself is one of the first gentlemen in England, and a nobleman. You forget—sure, you forget, Grand'mère."

"I forget not—I shall never forget, to my shame and sorrow. What enormity have I committed that a woman such as you should ask me to betray the child of the saints and martyrs of the galleys? The Bourbons are good nobility, but there are better—my own dear little one, so obedient, loving, and confiding!" cried Grand'mère, tried even beyond her patience, and weeping, and wringing her hands, and shaking as if she had seen a spectre, because she had been taken unawares in the credulity of her faith.

Lady Rolle stared, gathered up her train, and said—

"I make you a thousand apologies. I thought that I had heard of such things as *mariages de convenience*, and all that; I must have been wrong advised, but, as I said before, I fancied the good fashion, like the getting rid of the bantlings, came from France."

"Whatever you may have heard, madame," protested Grand'mère, in sad and solemn earnest, "whatever wrong *mariages de convenience* may have to answer for, no honest, righteous man or woman in France, or out of it, has ever employed the parental authority and the right of choice to accomplish a villainous barter and fraud."

Lady Rolle stared once more with flaming eyes, and flounced with stately step out of the arbor. She never sought Grand'mère, and never spoke to her again; only once more in all their lives did she address her, and that was in two written lines.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE SEDGE POND SORE THROAT.—THE WHITE CRUSADE.

THUS there was reprieve to Yolande from the craft and force of the offended quality. The Rolles quitted the castle for Tunbridge in coaches and six, chariots, and wagons,

exporting, as they had imported, the surfeit of self-indulgence, the icy glitter of wordly wit, and the furious contentions of unbridled wills. Mr. Hoadley alone remained behind, like a crow in the mist, to pursue some researches in the castle library for my lord, who was not disinclined to have a reputation for scholarship acquired at second-hand. The chaplain cheered his solitude by cultivating the friendship of the good women of the Shottery Cottage, until Madame herself thawed a little toward the young man, who listened so respectfully to her diatribes. Yolande, in her girlish severity, ceased to despise the weak young chaplain, whose weakness was no longer apparent in his fretful murmurs against his patrons and his slavish submission to them.

Dolly and Milly Rolle felt it a dreadful change to be thrown back on their old, idle home-life at the rectory, Lady Rolle not having invited either of them, as they had fondly hoped, to pass the season with her at the Wells and in town. And though luckily no little bird whispered to their caps the proposal which had so enraged Grand'mère, the great lady, while she could not offend, had grievously disappointed them.

In their extreme *ennui*, the rectory girls were so ill-off for social intercourse, that they set about taking up Yolande and the old Madame at the Shottery Cottage again. They were the more led to this perhaps that Mr. Hordley had taken them up, though he hardly ever came to the rectory, and then only to sit with their papa in his study, and to go back like a whining-school-boy to his tasks. Then their papa would come into the parlor, and say to Madam, their mother, in their hearing—

“My life, what a contrast there is between this foolish young jackanapes and our manly Philip! Was that one of the reasons of the boy’s going so soon? Was he early ripe, and needed no growing old?”

And Madam would wipe her eyes, and answer meekly—

“His Father knows best.”

But whining school-boy and foolish jackanapes though he was, Mr. Hoadley’s face was worth seeing, when all the fine folk were gone, and there was no other face to see. Mr. Hoadley was always least lackadaisical, and most sensible and spirited when beside Grand’mère, though Grand’mère’s

presence involved that of Yolande, to whom the crack-brained fellow affected to pay a sort of moon-struck, distant court, because he wanted a subject for his poor verses. The girls could see that with half an eye; and little Dupuy (the rectory girls had borrowed the term, along with many a worse trick, from the castle) was a simpleton and a hypocrite to permit it.

In one respect Yolande would not allow herself to be taken up by Dolly and Milly again; but as Grand'mère said—

“What will you? While we are in the world we must have neighbors, and we must love our neighbors and be at peace with them, and make the best of them, covering over their faults, condoning their offenses, and accepting their advances when they choose to make them—that is, in so far as integrity and self-respect permit, for we may not attempt the destructive impossibility of paying equal regard to truth and falsehood, and loving with the same tepid, indiscriminating love, friends real and counterfeit, indifferent strangers and actual foes. But they and we must struggle to live together in the faint reflection of the divine benevolence.”

No one was so quick to recognize this truth as Grand'mère. She therefore received and welcomed back the pastor's daughters, though she was not blind to their fickleness and did not think the ignorant, conceited, flippant girls improved by their temporary association with the Rolle family. Where would be the chance of the improvement of such as they, if the old, the wise, the better-gifted and taught, all took the pet at them, and cast off the poor, crawling, fluttering butterflies on the least provocation, and did not see and acknowledge in them, as in every other human being, the glorious promise of infinitely better and nobler things—a transformation such as the grub to the butterfly is but poor in comparison with?

The summer was hot, and from the slow river and the water standing in more than one slimy pond on the borders of the Waäste, a yellow mist rose and hovered over the village. Grand'mère remarked it, and pointed it out gravely to Yolande.

“It is the incense of the devil, which ascends as from the sulphur and brimstone wrecks of whole burnt-offerings of

sloth and sin. Watch and pray, my little one, that it may be changed into the sweet savor of God, which comes from heroic souls going down into the depths to save their brethren."

The rector had seen it before, and knew it too well. He therefore made preparations for it by arranging to send away his womenkind to cousins of his on the east coast; on learning which arrangement Dolly and Milly literally jumped for joy. Of what good were his timid, formal Madam, and his silly lasses in a calamity? They could only hang upon him and harass him.

Old Caleb Gage, too, had the sign pointed out to him by his friend the doctor in Reedham, and had his orphanage and his infirmary set in order. He added to his prayers every night an extra petition—that men might learn wisdom from chastisement, and that laborers might be sent for that harvest which grows white in a day—that harvest of life-in-death which is unspeakably precious and unspeakably awful in its supernatural growth and perfection. All the while the old squire talked more to young Caleb than he had ever done before, of the first Caleb Gage, who had driven the earliest plough into the wide Waäste, which then extended from Sedge Pond to Reedham, and how men had the wilderness earth given them to make it into a great garden of Eden. Young Caleb, he urged, should do this part of the great commission; but he would at once set about raising money by mortgage for the work. He took shame to himself that he had always postponed the draining, trenching, quarrying, and building operations on the estate till the time when his son should take possession of it. But, God helping him, by the next fall the bringing in of the land should be begun.

Now that the English summer was in its prime, and so far admitted indulgence in southern habits, Grand'mère loved best to take her meals in the open air. The rude villagers, spying through the garden-gate, or over the wall, where the branches of a spreading mulberry-tree screened them from the party within, could see a table set in the cottage porch, or in the arbor where cream-colored roses, in clusters, drooping with their own weight, had taken the place of the cold, blue-grey, scentless periwinkles. There were bronzed, shining beetles and earwigs in the roses, but Grand'mère could never dissever these insects from the rest

of God's creatures, and so she only brushed them softly away while Dolly and Milly screeched at the sight of them, and stamped the lives out of them with their high-heeled shoes. When it was any body's *fête*—and Grand'mère held that every body must have a *fête*, and that they and their friends were bound to celebrate it—Mr. Hoadley would have his flageolet, on which he could play fairly, and the girls would sing by turns with their simple skill, and Grand'mère would be as gay as a girl of twenty. When it was Grand'mère's own *fête*, Monsieur joined for once in the gayety, and uncorked the Médoc; and Madame, sombre under centuries of party spirit and sectarian wrong, fried the chickens and *saupoudrait* the strawberries, and looked on without a particle of offense at the little Mother's happiness; while big Prie waited stumpsily, in a wonderful neckerchief and hood, in token that she was in the open air, and was a British islander.

But one day in June the weather was so oppressive, that Grand'mère and her children were forced to abide languidly in the darkest corners of the parlor, though the villagers of Sedge Pond, condemned to work for their daily bread, were out making hay in the meadows by the river, as they had been all the week. She had lamented the obligation of the hay-making twenty times that day, and, taking the exposure of the people to heart, had been heavy over it in a way not customary with her. Yolande was almost thankful that Grand'mère must have forgotten the poor laborers, when the old woman broke a pause by exclaiming abruptly—

“Oh, that we had the thunder, though the peals split the stones, and the showers, though it rained horned cattle.”

“La! how can you wish such horrid things?” protested Dolly Rolle; “Milly and me are main frightened at thunder; we should go into fits at the first crack.”

“Oh, jioja!” Grand'mère put her off a little impatiently, “I should engage to bring you out of them again. I should bear all your maladies on the thumb—at least, I hope so, my dears. If we had the thunder and the showers, they might not be too late to cool and wash the reeking, engrained earth.”

“Why, madam, where's the reek and the engrainedness?” demanded the Rolles, pouting; “we never thought to hear

you call the place such shocking bad names as it puts us in a twitter to hear. The village smells, as it does in summer mostly, but what of that?"

"Pho! pho! my good lady, your imagination or your nerves are running away with you," even Mr. Hoadley remonstrated. "Haven't you felt heat before, and what it breeds in a sluttish village? I own I am too much of a slave to my nose, but I could not quite reconcile myself to wishing for a thunder-storm, not even though we have to thank the great Mr. Pope for one incident in a storm which is very pretty," he ended, with a profound sigh, wasted like his allusion, which nobody present comprehended.

"I tell you what is worse than the heat or even than the thunder," announced Milly Rolle, sapiently; "it is these poor folks sending for our papa every time they are taken with their infectious disorders, as if there was no chance of his being taken with them, and every other body at the rectory, and no end to the pother. I declare I think it is monstrous silly and unkind in them, after all our papa has done for them, and the doles which we dispense at Christmas and at Easter, though they are common villagers and do not know how to behave genteel to us. What do you say, Mr. Hoadley?—would you read prayers to them?"

"I would if I were asked, miss," answered the young man, coloring and hesitating for a moment, but speaking at last with decision, and in forgetfulness of the great Mr. Pope and his moving incident.

"To the hangman with being asked!" cried Grand'mère, excitedly; "who suffers in the village? What is the malady?"

"How should we know?" Dolly and Milly Rolle thus excused themselves in a breath from any farther acquaintance with disagreeable facts. "We'd have the dumps in no time if we took up our heads with whoever was laid down. Besides, we're to set out this day se'ennight; we are up to our eyes in business, and have only come out for an airing. Yes, indeed, Grand'mère, you may believe us or not, but we've to spur on Patty Brierley to finish our tambored gowns in time. We've to keep our mother in mind of all the clothes we must take with us, and we've to ride with Black Jasper to Reedham for what the packman forgot at his last call. It was only by chance that we learned that

there had been as good as three or four messages for our papa to attend sick-beds yesterday, and Doll was on the steps just before we came out, and heard another delivered about Mother Pott, who had been brought in from the hay-cocks with her throat as bad and her head as light as the rest."

"Ah!" said Grand'mère, "the thief discovers himself, and he is an old enemy;" and she named an epidemic which was then called putrid fever, that broke out in England toward the close of the last century, and mowed down whole families of the nobility as well as of their vilely-housed farm-laborers. "We must do what we can to arrest the terrible thief. I have met him before, and struggled to take his booty from him—alas! not always with success. Now who is with me to cry 'stop thief,' and do what the good God wills to snatch from the villain the living prey which, ah! the *misère*, is delivered gagged and bound into his greedy clutches?"

At that moment the dismal sound of the passing bell stole out with a sullen clangor on the thick and loaded air. The Rolles fell back with their fingers in their ears, but before the first dull vibration had ceased, "I'm with you, Grand'mère," said Yolande, with a swelling breast and shining eyes.

"Oh! dear, what has come to you Dupuys?" complained the Rolles, in shrill discomfiture and exasperation. "You don't mean to tell us that you are so crazy as to wait upon the poor bodies that are sick? A fig for them, if that is to be the way of it, for we can't come here again for any more confabs if you go near stricken persons, we promise you that; and little Dupuy, who gives herself the airs of a princess or a nun, will never make so bold, and be so free. We were told the people themselves shut the doors in each other's faces, and won't lend a hand to nurse the living or bury the dead. And you are not clergy—no, nor even doctors."

"Pardon," said Grand'mère, rising to the occasion, and speaking quite cheerily, "every woman finds herself a little of the one and a little of the other so soon as she is tried, or she is no true woman and handmaid of the Great Physician and Heavenly Priest. Besides, we have had the gift of the knowledge of herbs in our family since Bernarde Romilly stanch'd the wounds of the Condé. Have I never told

you that? If the rest of the village shut the door, the better reason that I an old woman should open and enter where fear and pain are all the company. *Degrâce*, they will not keep me out now."

"Madame," said Mr. Hoadley, in great excitement, "I have not spoken, but I trust that you do not doubt I am your servant, to go on whatever errand you like to send me among the poor. If it become your gown, all the more must it become my cloth. I cry Heaven's mercy and yours that I have not seen it so before, and I am thankful that my patrons are not here to forbid me doing my duty when my eyes are open. But, my dear old Madame, you are not so reckless as to run so frightful a risk as permit another and altogether unsuitable attendant—though the Bible has records of ministering angels," ended the chaplain, hurriedly, with a significant glance at Yolande, who accepted the implication and repudiated the objection with the coolest indifference, if not the liveliest indignation.

"Monsieur, Grand'mère and I never part. If there is a task which she, old and feeble as she is, can undertake, why should I, who am young and strong, not be capable of it? If the question is one of worthiness and unworthiness, I comprehend Monsieur; but if not, I do not comprehend at all. But, young girl as I am, Mr. Hoadley, Grand'mère thinks me neither too bad nor too foolish to work with her in nursing the sick and serving God, who will pardon my unworthiness, and teach and help my weakness and folly."

Poor Mr. Hoadley was confounded.

But Grand'mère was not so hard upon Mr. Hoadley and his motives; her days of girlish severity and sauciness had long been past, yet she, too, was against him.

"My friend, you do not know the French. Vincent de Paul introduced another fashion among us an age ago. There are girls by hundreds no older than Yolande among the Sisters of Charity and the Sisters of Mercy. The peasants began to shame the nobles. We are only *bourgeoisie*, but the nobles shamed the peasants and us by forming the *béguines* of Bruxelles; and there is many a noble girl in Vincent de Paul's blessed family at this hour. Assuredly, though we are Huguenots, and sing each year on the anniversary of the Revocation, 'By Babel's streams we sat and wept,' yet we are not lost to charity, and we fear not for our

daughters, though their vows are silent and secret, and known only to themselves and their God. Go! there is nothing to fear. Can we best keep off the wolf by flying from him, or by going to meet him, hatchet in hand? As for the contagion and the infection, I know them not, save as being still the finger and the breath of the living God that only reach as he wills. No journeys, no closed doors and bolted windows, will chase them away any more than they will chase away death. Truly, we want swift feet and iron barriers to escape from the King of Terrors, my son; and I have never heard that he strikes the sister, the doctor, or the priest more than another. When he does," added Grand'mère, quailing a little, not for herself, but as she felt the contact of Yolande's warm young hand with her own chill and withered one, "some men and women ought to be the bravest of the brave; some soldiers ought to lead the van, and God be praised, the French women are brave. Have you not heard of our heroic *cantinières*? Nevertheless, I shall not take my young recruit into the battle without her father's and mother's consent."

Madame came forward on the spot. She did not know what the bruit was about, or why Grand'mère should act the good *marquise* or *baronne* to the strange country people. But without doubt, if she chose to do so, Yolande should help her. She should die with vexation and shame at the idea of sparing a child of hers when the old mother made the venture. As to danger and to death, they were old comrades of the Huguenots, who knew what heavenly treasures and indestructible jewels to snatch from them.

"Thou good Philippine!" exclaimed Grand'mère, with enthusiasm. "She has hands like that! our Philippine. She can make a salad; she can make a *cataplasme*! We are *bêtes* beside her when she throws her soul into the oil-cruet, the camomile bouquet."

But no; Madame's Christian charity was only for Grand'mère and the Huguenots: it began and ended with them, and by no means extended to perfidious strangers, English and Lutheran. All the worse for Madame, since from this time when she sent off Grand'mère and Yolande on their universal mission, and refused to have part or lot in the matter, the sternness and narrowness of her galled spirit fettered and cramped her tenfold.

“Hey-day!” Dolly and Milly had been forced to utter, in final protest; “you’re all mad together at the Shottery Cottage this afternoon—as mad as the Methodies and the Bedlamites. And since Parson Hoadley is smitten, we can not be too glad that we’re a-going, lest we should be the next; though we were never used to vagaries, nor brought up to them.”

And thus Grand’mère at last found an entrance to the people, and Madame Rougeole once more tapped her way, and rested confidingly by sick-beds. Mother Pott was the first whom she visited. She found the door shut and the window stuffed with rags. In the stifling darkness the woman’s children, already ranged in a ragged row, were wailing like mourners hired for a wake. They had a dim notion of comforting and paying respect to their poor mother, who had toiled for them like a beast of burden, and borne them on her rough but sound and gallant heart, even when she “melled” them and “flyted” over them. Deb was clanking about in her haymaker’s hat and clogs, the last put on for the house-floor, as “t’were aye weet a bit, unless the weather were main dry for a long spell;” and telling the little ones in solemn seriousness, and with a rude pathos, to sob away, and not bide to seek t’supper, for a craving stomach were one thing and an orphan hap another. Sure they ’ud get more suppers if they tramped and begged for them; but no tramping, and no begging, and no working would get them more mothers. A middle-aged, weak-minded neighbor, as uncouth as Deborah, was holding down Mother Pott’s gaunt arms, which were instinctively struggling to tear off the old clothes heaped upon her, and to raise her tossing head and swollen purple face, that she might not be suffocated in the first stage of her disease.

“Don’t’ee, now, don’t’ee,” the neighbor was enjoining plainly, “or a’ll have to slap and punch’ee. There’s nought but the sweat for’ee. What ud’ee hold up t’heed like a hen going to drink for? Heed mun be happed, t’must, lass. Nobut t’hour’s come, Mother Pott, and ee’ll gang, but a’d have’ee to gang peaceably, and not like an ill-doer. Ee’s been nash all thy life, ’ooman; ’ee might take a telling in the end, and show ’ee can behave sen afore the childrer i’ t’ deed-thraw.”

Deb made such an outcry when she saw Grand’mère, with

Yolande at her back, that even the sick woman's ears, filled by the wild music of delirium, were pierced by the sound, and she desisted from her frantic movements for a moment, and turned her glaring eyes toward the door.

Had it not been that Mr. Hoadley followed Grand'mère and Yolande, and that Deb recognized him, and bobbed her courtesy to him as being one of the gentlefolks of the castle, she would have tried with all her might—and she had the making of an Amazon in her—to drive out Grand'mère by force. As it was, she stood before the bed, and threw up her lank girlish arms in a desperate appeal.

"Mother, mother, it's the French quean, with her plots and cantrips. She be come for me as soon as you're laid down. Her's a witch, mother, and her's laid'ee down, m'appen, 'cause, if'ee called me a burdock, and drubbed me, 'ee kept a roof aboon my heed and a bite in my mouth, and brought me up honest."

Deborah Pott had reason to remember that speech long afterward.

Mother Pott's nurse, Sukey Frew, on hearing this, fled, with her teeth chattering in her head, from the contamination of foreigners and witchcraft combined.

But Mother Pott herself was unable to comprehend the situation, or to do more than raise her head with a jerk, and gabble hoarsely of Deb's being "a burdock and a tomboy, but feether's child, and a ud do a's dooty by her, though t' little ones ud clem for it."

"Wench!"—Mr. Hoadley would have put aside Deb indignantly—"do you not know your betters, when Madame, heaven preserve her! has done you the grace to come here at the risk of her life?"

But Grand'mère interrupted him, beseeching, apologizing, and explaining, as though it had been her who received the grace.

"My poor girl, will you not permit me to aid you? I ask your pardon that I intrude; I would never have done it, but for the extremity. Look you, I can go and leave you to suffer—*misericorde*, how you suffer!—if you will, which is your right. I will torment you no more by my strange looks and ways, unless you say, 'Stay, my old Madame,' when once I have relieved the sick. But yes, I can ease if I can not cure, and I may save others. I pray you, Deborah,

allow me at least, before I go, to open the window and door, and give the sick a breath of air. It is God's air, my child, which he made for us all, for high and low, and for all the beasts of the field, great and small, that you know and love. I am sure of that. Then why have you such fear of the good air—the sweet air? The beasts of the field, do they fear it? No, they are wiser—taught by God their Father alone—they drink it in, they rejoice in it."

Poor Deb stared, listened, and gave up all active opposition, looking like one spell-bound and fascinated.

"Yes, since Monsieur has held open the door and Yolande unfastened the window," continued Grand'mère, striking when the iron was hot, "the poor woman breathes more softly—rests tranquil by comparison. Have pity upon her; she had pity on you even in seeking to save you from us, whom she knew not—whom she mistook. But judge for yourself, Deborah; you are not a little child—you are a big girl; have we not returned good for evil? No, we do not hurt any one if we can help it; we only heal, if we can, as you would do in your turn, my girl. Is it not so? Monsieur the pastor is with us; he believes us, and that would re-assure mother if she could hear and see. We will find a pillow for her, and prop up her head. Make one of thine arm, meantime, my child, until we can find another. The arm is not full fleshed, but it is firm, and round, and soft as the down compared with the wooden block; the unworn young arm is a good rest for the worn old head. Now, we will try if she can swallow this balsam; she was in the hay-field so recently as this sun-rise, poor diligent one, and, God willing, she may hear and see again."

But Mother Pott never heard and saw clearly in this world again; never understood distinctly, or knew any thing farther than that her mortal anguish was alleviated, in the degree in which wisdom and mercy could alleviate it. By a twist of the mind which was not without its moral beauty, she attributed all the poor solaces so unexpected and unfamiliar to her, to her step-daughter, and regarded them as the recompense, not only of her just dealing toward the girl, but of the rating which she had administered to her heavy handful.

"A's made a woman of'ee, Deb," was her last broken murmur; "and now, sin'ee can make a syllabus like the

mistress at the hale'-ouse, and read like pearson, ye'll hang on a's hands no longer ; ee's be no more a burdock, lass, but a new ha'penny, stamped to be changed. A's miss you, Deb, a and the childer."

Five orphans were transmitted at once to the Mall orphange ; but Grand'mère took the stunned and sorrow-laden Deborah home to Priscille, and braved and conquered the righteous wrath of that sovereign in her own domain at the unsightly importation.

"Old Madame," began Priscille, "I've served you and the family this score of years, the same as if I were all straight, and you had not been furrin. I've nought to say against the furrin ways ; leastways, I've put up with them ; but to have a young hussy and slut brought under my nose, and into my very kitchen, that I can't and won't abide."

"Prie, Prie, the Lord Jesus Christ had not where to lay his head once in his life, and as this poor child is like him in that respect, know you not that when you take her in you take Him ? He said it Himself. Oh ! the privilege, the blessing to Shottery Cottage, to me, and to you, big Prie !"

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## CHAPTER XVII.

GRAND'MÈRE AND YOLANDE GAIN ALLIES IN THE CRUSADE,  
WHICH TURNS OUT TO BE FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF SOULS  
AS WELL AS BODIES.

MR. HOADLEY, having once joined the crusade to please Grand'mère and Yolande, remained on his own account, finding it such a school of humanity and divinity as he had never dreamed of in his University course, or in his chaplain's service at the castle. The poetaster now got his first experience of nature in the rough, and the amateur priest first saw and sympathized with the real woes and wants of the poor. These woes and wants suggested the existence of a gulf which startled and appalled the young man, and almost drove him out of the field with despair at the thought of how long he had been a consenting party to them by his selfish obliviousness and sloth. He blamed himself for never having lifted up a finger to protest against them or to lighten them, while all the time he was crying out and be-

moaning himself for his patrons' tyranny, corruption, and worldliness.

While the quality at the Wells or in town were attitudinizing, swearing, squabbling, drinking, and gambling their lives away, such villages as Sedge Pond were wallowing in the dregs of the quality's vices, and committing brutalities which would have shamed the heathen. The difference between the practices of the two classes was as Bartholomew Fair to Ranelagh. With the one there were matches at single-stick, wrestling, and boxing, with gouging out of eyes into the bargain ; with the other, there were studies of dress and cookery, exchanges of pistol-shots and sword play.

Sedge Pond was rural, but it was the reverse of innocent ; its rurality indeed only seemed to add grossness to its guilt. When, therefore, the summer scourge was laid on the inhabitants, pricked to the heart by remorse and dread of the hell of which they had the foretaste within them, they took to frenzied confession and abject submission. Mr. Hoadley was tempted to think that the catalogue of their misdeeds went near to exhausting the Newgate Calendar. It almost turned him sick with disgust and aversion to hear a hoary sinner proclaiming that in his youth he had committed highway robbery for which another man had swung in chains, and that he had gone and looked on at the execution. There were sons who had struck mothers in their blind fury ; fathers who had turned out daughters into the darkness of night. There were brothers who had not exchanged friendly words for scores of years, but had lived railing at and reviling each other ; while there were sisters who combined to plunder fathers and mothers on their death-beds, and to defraud nephews and nieces while their natural protectors were laid in their coffins. There were men who had not slept sober in other men's remembrance, and women who went to the ale-house tap as regularly as the horses went to the watering trough. A wild, dissolute set of country people, of whom the purer-living were narrow and griping as a vice and hard as a stone. The rector had done his best for them. He had shown them the life of a God-fearing, righteous, stern man, so that instead of mocking and scoffing at it, they respected and shrunk away from it. He had rescued and trained the most of those who stood upright, but there was a link wanting between him

and the reprobates ; and this want lay, not so much in the present, perhaps, as in the past ; but it was in the past that the grooves had been fitted in, on which the wheels of the pastor's and people's lives ran, and from which it was hard to dislodge them.

These were the men and women among whom Grand'mère and Yolande went day after day, not only without fear, but without loathing. To the pure all things are pure, and these evangelists and ministrants bore about with them charmed natures as well as charmed lives.

"How can you do it, Madame?" cried Mr. Hoadley, aghast at the inhumanity, brutishness, and villainy which he found had been festering and smoldering beneath his steps ; "how can you do it, Madame?" he cried, as Grand'mère moistened the lips of a man whose wife had fled out of ear-shot of his blasphemies, while Yolande bathed the brazen, branded brow of a mother, but no wife, and received into her arms an outcast of a child.

"What is it, my pastor ? I have not gone and preached to the spirits that are in prison ; yet it is written that my Master and yours did this. What are these but lost sheep, fallen, soiled, covered with bruises and wounds ? And what am I, my Monsieur, save a wandering sheep whom the Good Shepherd took pity upon and brought back into the fold ? There is but one heart and one brain in humanity, if you knew it. You will know it, my poor friend, when your own heart is rent and broken, and pierced and wrung, and when it can only bleed inwardly for itself, while outwardly it wipes its own tears off the cheeks of others, and binds up its aching wounds in the stabs and gashes which are all around it."

"And has *she*, too, suffered so much?" inquired Mr. Hoadley, with a gape of bewilderment, as he pointed to Yolande.

"Certainly no," Grand'mère corrected him. "She will suffer yet, poor little one, for it is her destiny. In waiting she has great faith ; and know you not, Monsieur, that faith removes mountains?"

When old Caleb Gage, called as promptly by the tolling of the death-bell at Sedge Pond as a soldier by the bugle call, came across from the Mall, Mr. Hoadley witnessed another marvel. The old Methodist entered in among these groaning, writhing, cursing men and women, and drew aside

the curtain which divided them, not from hell, but from heaven. He showed them the Prince of Life, with the marks of his cross upon Him, bending down from the Father's right hand, as if saying, "Look up, I have suffered and travailed for you; and now both the work and the warfare is finished. There is nothing left for you to do but to look up. Only believe, and your pains and sorrows and evil behavior are all past and done with. There remain for you but the Father's kiss, the best robe, the ring for your hand, and the shoes for your feet, for to-day you shall be with me in Paradise."

Caleb Gage knew no other gospel than that gospel of freest, fullest salvation. He had announced it along with Mr. Charles Wesley as freely and fully at the foot of the gallows-tree at Tyburn as elsewhere. And when the condemned criminals passed one after the other to death, with strange meltings of their hardness and hope dawning in their faces, he, too, had counted the hours he had spent with them as among the happiest, most glorious hours of his life.

Mr. Hoadley, in after days, declared solemnly that he had seen miracles of grace wrought at this time. Before the persuasions and the wrestlings in prayer of Grand'mère, and the perfect assurance of Caleb Gage, he had seen the chief of sinners receive the Gospel like little children; the ignorant and the out-of-the-way drink in the glad tidings; the scales fall off eyes long spiritually blind; the dead heart and conscience come back to life in a day—in an hour. He had seen faces of every type of coarseness and forbidding repulsiveness change in the twinkling of an eye, and wear traits of compunction, gratitude, and devotion, which they had never worn before—at least, not since they had rested on mothers' bosoms or fathers' knees. Mouths which had foamed forth profanity and obscenity when he first came within reach, now poured forth praises of God and blessings of men. And although not all of those to whom Grand'mère and Caleb Gage came responded to the call—some being steeped in grudging stupidity, rancor, and despair to the last—yet enough did so for Mr. Hoadley to have witnessed the awfully glorious harvest of life-in-death.

Grand'mère, old Squire Gage, and even Yolande took the scenes to a certain extent as matters of course—rejoicing or sorrowful as they were moved, but never thunderstruck or

shaken to the centre of their being. But on Mr. Hoadley the effect was remarkable. He beheld, wondered, doubted, questioned, and believed. At last came an occasion when he went home and shut himself up in his room in the castle for hours, and was found by a servant faint and bathed in sweat, as though he had recovered from a trance, but with his face bright and shining; and though he forbade the servant to speak of it, he never denied that he had returned to the world a new man. He went that moment, and stood by one of the dying-beds which Mr. Gage could not attend; he held up the cross which another had carried, and the crown immortal and eternal which another wore. Thus he shed light into the deep gloom of a dark soul, and sped it to a realm of light.

“There is nothing worth but the saving of souls, Grand’mère,” vowed the impulsive young man; “henceforth I dedicate myself to the work to which I was unworthily consecrated.”

“The good God register your vow in the archives of Heaven, my son, and the Holy Ghost lend you strength to keep it!” exclaimed Grand’mère, weeping over him, and kissing him on each cheek as a son indeed.

“The Lord will not forsake the good work which He has begun,” declared the young man with solemn confidence.

“Only remember always, my friend, that it is God and not man who saves souls, that He saves them in a thousand ways, and that his ways are not as our ways,” Grand’mère cautioned him, earnestly.

Thenceforth Mr. Hoadley worked with Grand’mère and Yolande incessantly, was their right-hand man, their fellow-soldier, their son and brother in the good fight. Meantime, the shyness between Squire Gage and the women passed away. It had been somewhat indefinite and intangible on both sides; but there it had been, and only such common works of loving-kindness as they were now engaged in could have dispersed it. And Squire Gage, seeing the young priest with his new commissions, which invested his sensitive, intellectual face with new nobility and manliness, thanked God and took courage. But sometimes he would sigh for the Mall and his son as he watched the young man and the girl in such constant association. Not that either of them, above all the girl, betrayed much consciousness of their close communion

in the engrossing anxiety and interest of the mortal sickness and desolation at Sedge Pond. Still, the squire could not help observing and summing-up Yolande's fine qualities—her soft touch, her light foot, her womanly endurance, intelligence, and resource, as well as her buoyance and cheerfulness under actual difficulties, which were beginning to rise and relieve her habitual gravity. His eyes would turn toward the young girl as she delivered her report to Mr. Hoadley, as she entrusted him with commissions, and took him to task for their execution, as she shared with him the rosemary, sweet majoram, and thyme, which were then held potent against infection from the most terrible of epidemics; and he bethought him of Lucy Gage, who had made himself thrice blessed, and sighed over young Caleb's loss.

Young Caleb did not absent himself from the strife between the great forces of physical and moral good and evil. But he came ostensibly to support his father, in reality to tire out his good horse, and put his shoulder to the wheel for every one needing help, doing more in his own way in an hour than Mr. Hoadley could do in three. In another respect, young Caleb Gage stood dumb before the chaplain, because the young squire's turn was not for preaching and teaching.

"Though," he said one day to his father, "I trust, sir, I could do and die."

But Grand'mère's natural French overture, which had proved such a complete failure on English soil, had erected an insurmountable barrier between young Caleb and Yolande. The mutual affront had sunk so deep that the breach was too wide for any hope of its being repaired. The young man, indeed, might look with a certain curiosity at the girl whom, on their first introduction, he had fancied so proud and learned as to look askance on a country fellow like him; and he could not choose but admire one who had not her equal in those parts, and might even speculate with the faintest instinct of regret on what might have been if she had not been offered to him. But now of course Mademoiselle Dupuy was destined for Parson Hoadley, to whom he only took as yet in a modified way, since their temperaments differed widely, and in youth differences of temperament rarely exist without corresponding jars. This was true without Caleb's having any suspicion of the chap-

lain's sudden goodness; he was too good and candid himself for that. Nor, thick-headed as he called himself, would he have denied Mr. Hoadley's lately awakened eloquence, for the young squire had too much sense and feeling not to appreciate a natural orator when he heard him.

And if Caleb Gage remained utterly estranged from Yolande, with no chance whatever of familiar intercourse, the relations between him and Grand'mère were infinitely worse. He had a positive pique against his father's ally and dear friend, who had done only one thing to offend him, and who, though she kept away from him now with a kind of meek, pathetic dignity, bore him no ill-will in return. So far as Caleb Gage the younger could entertain active dislike against a woman old enough to be his grandmother, he entertained it against her. He said to himself, as Madam at the rectory had said, on her first acquaintance with Grand'mère, that her dress, her beauty, her sensibility, and the graphic emphasis which she could not help putting into most things, were attributes unbecoming a woman of her age and situation, and savored of flightiness and eccentricity. He would have had Grand'mère theoretically clothed in sackcloth and ashes, such as Madame her daughter-in-law wore, although he had not liked Madame Dupuy particularly in their slight acquaintance. The young squire, remembering Mr. Fletcher of Madeley, did not quarrel with his father for being the old Madame's sworn champion. But as for Hoadley's veneration and enthusiasm for the old Frenchwoman, he could only regard these as means to an end.

Thus it happened that when Grand'mère's popularity was at its height at Sedge Pond, and when the villagers were murmuring blunt acknowledgments of their offense in having rejected her because of her foreign nation, and were muttering blessings on her as she ministered to them, there was one dissentient voice. And it came from a quarter which would have been perfectly incredible to Yolande, and which, if she could have credited it, would have been apt to overwhelm her acquired tranquillity with a flood of bitterness and doubts of her kind.

The rector was at his post without fail, and met the workers in his parish at every corner. He took their service more patiently than he was wont to do—nay, he even toler-

ated it as a co-operation permissible in an extraordinary strait, and excusable by the license due to a stranger like Grand'mère, and by the presence of a churchman and clerical brother, Mr. Hoadley. But notwithstanding this concession, the rector feared that his old bugbear, the impracticable methodistic Whig, Squire Gage of the Mall, and Grand'mère Dupuy, with her extravagant, rebellious bias as a Frenchwoman and a Huguenot, were seducing and perverting the dabbling, sentimental lad of a chaplain, who had gone off on a new tack, and was traveling fifty times faster by it than even the quondam captain of a slaver, Newton of Olney, or the bred grazier, Scott of Weston, thus preparing work for the bishops by and by.

The rector could not go in with their doings, though he could not and would not, in the present crisis, stop them by force. He had his own views of faith and repentance, and he could make them agree with Scripture according to his logic. He would pray and read the service with such as would accept his offices, and he was far from refusing grace to any man. But the direct addresses, impassioned representations, sublime dogmas, and swift changes of the Methodists, with their agonies and their transports, were not in the line of the reserved, orderly, formal rector, any more than lay preaching and the public ministration of women were. He had no disposition to cavil at the doctrine of original and abounding sin ; but that application of it which reduced all men to one level, and placed in the same rank his honest, faithful, gallant hero, laid to rest where his colors had been planted, on the plains of the far West, with the greatest thief, liar, and craven vagabond in Sedge Pond, was all but hateful to Mr. Philip Rolle. Yet, if the rector could not understand, he would not persecute—nay, he rather looked on with thrills of sympathy in the midst of his strong objections, and granted magnanimously that it were no wonder though the whole world went after the performance.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## MADAM ROLLE'S CALENDAR.

MR. PHILIP ROLLE's summary of the duty of women was that they should keep house, obey their husbands, and bring up children. His aversion to engaging in any public service was not decreased by seeing the uncouth wench, Deborah Pott, after having had a brush with the enemy on her own account, creeping out of the Shottery Cottage, hanging on the skirts of Grand'mère and Yolande, and beginning to give very awkward assistance. Deborah somehow reminded the rector of Black Jasper, and he could not help feeling that if these new-fangled liberties continued, he would have his "fellow" mounting the pulpit and giving out the psalm at least once a day over his master's head. Mr. Rolle retired to his rectory, now empty of his particular womankind, and he set himself to bring vividly before his mind a sweeter, more womanly, and more excellent way.

In the quiet night, when all the rectory servants were asleep, the rector sat in his room. He could not rest, so he went to Madam's little Tunbridge box and opened it, for he had the key of it, as he had the key of her heart, there being no corner in all her domain, or in all her thoughts, which Madam kept close from the rector. There was something in itself suggestive in seeing so manly a man tenderly handling and turning over a woman's hoards ; and yet it is men like the rector, autocratic, imperious, and stoical, who prize above all things the softness, even the helplessness, of women, and who, in their relations to women, have an inexhaustible well-spring of tenderness, forming a striking contrast to the rock from which it issues. With jealous care and delicate reverence Mr. Rolle disarranged his wife's treasures in order to find what he sought. Yet they were valueless treasures in all save kindred eyes, and he knew them all well. Chief among them were a pair of worn fringed gloves, which had been his first gift when he had

chosen her out of a country-house full of girls for his partner, on that Twelfth Night long past, and a yellow copy of exceedingly stilted verses, written on a similar occasion. He pshawed at the verses as his own boyish rubbish, but Madam valued them as highly as ever, and was often as near angry with him as she could be for willfully depreciating what she kept so carefully preserved in a pouncet box. There were two or three letters on journeys before and immediately after their marriage, containing elaborate advices for the improvement of her mind, and even of her spelling, with dictatorial directions as to what she was to read, think, and believe; and these struck him at this time of day as strangely pragmatical. The laboriously prepared sermon which he had delivered before an erudite bishop, and his favorite homily, which he had got put into print with some small detriment to his purse, he found carefully folded, with rose leaves laid between the pages to scent them. And he came on locks of hair of their three children. Two of them were Captain Philip's; a yellow curl, the companion rings of which had met no rougher touch than the pat of the rector's hand and the kiss of Madam's lips; and a dark brown lock, the fellows of which Madam had seen, in vision, dank with death-sweat and glued together with life blood. There were also two cockades, one which Captain Philip had worn when a baby to distinguish him as the rector's boy, for Madam had "been so mad" when he was mistaken for a girl; and another which the young officer had carried through fire and smoke, as a political and regimental badge. In fellowship with these were Captain Philip's letters to his mother, tattered with much reading, most of them ending with the loving assurance, "till I see you again."

But it was none of these the rector was in search of. It was something of a slightly different character, which he knew was among the papers. It was a sort of private calendar which Madam had made of the Psalms in the Prayer-book that she had used since she was a girl. Passages had been marked, and little slips of paper inserted, of different dates and different stages of handwriting. They were the shy, simple, devout records of a modest, purely domestic life. At length the rector found it, and read in it here and there what touched the core of his manly heart:—

“Psalm 23d.—My earliest remembrance is being kept out of bed by old nurse Simmons, in order to astonish mother on her coming back from evening service, by my childish proficiency in this psalm. As it was my earliest, so may it be my latest study.”

“Psalm 119th.—In my youthful years I was so given up to ambition and self-conceit as to undertake to say this whole psalm by heart to Grandfather Horner, who was to give me a silver crown-piece in return. I need not say that pride got a fall and I lost my crown-piece, for I wearied of my task, and my memory broke down before I was half done. *Mem.*—To ask the rector whether Grandfather Horner acted judiciously in setting me such a hard task, thus stirring up my spirit of emulation, since Sister Betty and Brother Joe tried too. For long it was only by a mighty effort that I got over a dislike to that jewel of the experimental psalms; and I am sorry to say Brother Joe avers that he dislikes it to this day.”

“Psalm 1st.—In preparing for my confirmation, my clergyman, Mr. Moultrie, hath hoped that I shall prove ‘like a tree planted by the water-side.’ I fear me ‘twill be but such a crooked sapling as that which we have all laughed at in the cherry orchard. Yet may not God be tender of what men laugh at?”

“Psalm 4th.—‘Thou hast put gladness in my heart since the time that the corn and wine, and oil increased.’ Word is come that father hath lost the Hurstpierpoint suit. So that though he is still a gentleman of moderate substance, me and my sisters have no longer a chance of being heiresses. We have made up our minds to our loss more easily than we thought to do, and will not grudge the property to our cousins Hepworth. We made quite merry last night on being spinsters, and living on narrow incomes like Aunt Polly, who mother affirms is the grig of her family. Father hath not been so little humorsome for a long time as during this week, because he says he can endure certainty, like a man of spirit as he always was; and indeed his temper was ruffled by waiting, and by what he called lawyers’ quibbles. In addition, Brother Joe has given up all thought of going to town to study in the Temple and learn to be a fine gentleman. He tells me that he minds not the deprivation, for he always preferred country folk and the green fields, which

will make home so much less lonesome this winter than if we had been rich."

"Psalm 39th.—Our Betty hath sunk into a decline, and passed away from our arms. How can I write it? The last time the parson was with her he read this psalm—'twas the last one Betty heard, when her beauty was consumed away, 'like as it were a moth fretting a garment.' Father said, had we gotten Hurstpierpoint, the removal to moister air might have stayed the waste, or he might have carried his darling to the court physicians; but she opened not her mouth to murmur or complain, because she followed One who was obedient unto death. And I, too, will become dumb, for it is His doing."

"Psalm 24th.—Mr. Philip Rolle, who is a distant kinsman of father's, and who came to see us this Whitsuntide, did say that the verse, 'The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is; the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein,' would form a fine inscription for trades halls and halls of commerce, not forgetting the Houses of Parliament, He is a great historian, and he said also, of the 48th Psalm, that the verse, 'Thou shalt break the ships of the sea through the east wind,' would have made as good a motto as that chosen for the medal our Queen Elizabeth struck to commemorate the defeat of the Armada. Mr. Philip Rolle's opinion must be worth recording, as he is already in holy orders, and is said to be a young man of uncommon parts and promise, for so fine a gentleman."

"Psalm 6th.—'My beauty is gone for very trouble, and worn away because of all mine enemies.' This day se'enight was the first day Dolly and me and Anne Ventnor were permitted to get up and see ourselves after the modified pox, which we need not have had but that my cousins Mapleton would not keep away from the Hall when they had a case of the natural pox at the Great House. At last they took the alarm, and then they insisted on mother having all of us inoculated who had not been already done. I was not in a fit state for it, as I had suffered lately from sick-headaches, brought on by cousins Mapleton making mischief between Brother Joe and father, and leaving us to bear the brunt of it. The inoculation has gone worst with me, so that I have almost had as bad a bout as if I had been afflicted with the original disease, and have come out as thin

as a whipping-post, and with my face all scarred and swollen like a marred turnip. Somebody will not know me again when he comes back to the neighborhood, and I don't mean to help his memory. The worst of it is (and it made me cry like a baby last night), that cousins take the credit to themselves for getting me inoculated, and say my sufferings show how virulent the real malady would have been with me, had I ever caught it, which was not likely unless busybodies had brought it to me. In the same manner they take credit for getting poor Joe in grief, professing that it will be a lesson to him not to take his game off his elders and betters in future. Cousins Mapleton never see that they do any thing wrong. I have not forgotten our Betty and how lovely and pleasant she was, and how very meek under God's hand ; but then it was God's hand, while this only seems the hand of cousins Mapleton."

Below this entry was added, in the comparatively recent angular hand in which Madam copied out her recipes, and occasionally, with a touch of pride, wrote extracts from the Fathers for the rector's use : "What a peevish, vain fool of a lass I must have been to make so solemn an application appropriate to such a trifle, though I do remember it seemed no trifle to me in those days. I wonder why Mr. Rolle had aught to do with me, as if he would have demeaned himself to mind a painted skin (not that I ever touched a paint pot in my life—I'd liefer touch pitch, and for all my outcry I was as plump and fair as ever in three months time). Cousins Mapleton were perfectly right ; as I have reason to be thankful, since there are constantly cases of small-pox occurring in Sedge Pond. I have brought myself to take the same precaution with the completest success in the case of my lad and my little lasses. Even about Brother Joe I can trace his becoming solid, putting away childish things, and showing himself mother's best stay and chief support in her widowhood, to his being forced to appease father's wrath at the outrages committed on my cousins Mapleton's credulity and nerves by new alarms of the Scotch rebels, and mock thefts of jugged hare from the larder."

"Psalm 45th.—'Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.' Philip hath not chosen that verse, or any

part of it, for my posy ring ; not that he reckons it would be profaning the psalm, which, he says, was an epithalamium or nuptial song, like the Song of Solomon in its day ; but that he considers it, while a fit, inspired figure for a state of nature which ought to be forsaken for a state of grace, at the same time an Eastern sentiment, and not to be taken too literally. He is not afraid of any rival in the oldest, dearest friend I have, but gives me leave to cherish them to the utmost. I wot he has no cause to fear any of them."

" Psalm 41st.—‘Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.’ Mr. Rolle hath very discreetly reproved a sinner of high rank by causing to be laid on his escritoire a copy of this verse, though the upshot is that the sinner (following my husband’s good example—I shall mention no names) hath crushed up the writing, trampled it under foot, called the writer an intolerable, meddling jackanapes, and ruined the poor man without delay. But my husband has played his part, and it is only because his conscience is tender that it pricks him, and tempts him to declare that he was an intolerable, meddling jackanapes—leastways, a weak, cowardly fool, to hit on so shallow and underhand a plan ; he will never do so again, and he will indemnify the poor man for the injury out of his own pocket ; which is like my good man, both the taking the blame upon himself, and the indemnification.”

" Psalm 13th.—‘Consider and hear me, O Lord my God ; lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death.’ If it be thy will, good Lord, deal mercifully with me, and spare me to the best and noblest of husbands, to whom I think I am with thy consent a little needful, and to my unborn babe, when my pangs come upon me.”

" Psalm 16th.—‘The lot is fallen to me in a fair ground : yea, I have a goodly heritage.’ Make me thankful and humble of heart, my Lord and Saviour, in that I have been kept to see this day, when good old Mr. Butler hath made a Christian of my boy, giving him the name of his worthy father, my Lady Rolle and Brother Joe standing for sponsors.”

" Psalm 56th.—‘They daily mistake my words : all that they imagine is to do me evil.’ If it were but my poor

words, I should not mind ; but the rector's own wise and righteous words ! I could not have thought it of Lucy Gage ; it is all along of that Whig and Methodist squire to say that Philip Rolle's sermons narrow and shame the grand comprehensive scheme of salvation ! Pray, who should know how to deliver doctrine, give his testimony against heresy, and hold the oracles of God for the people, if not a good priest, trained for and faithful to his work, a gently-born, just, learned, and consecrated man ? What insubordination to bring into the parish ! What ingratitude for all the rector has done and suffered for them ! Well-a-day ! the world is a wicked and weary world, not one whit better than in the days of King David."

"Psalm 104th.—'Men's faint echo of the song of the morning stars, and the shout of the sons of God, when the great Creator made this ravishing world. Surely it will always be very good, in spite of all the lying lips and sharp tongues speaking vanity.' Methinks so on this May morning, when the rector has stepped out from his study window on to the lawn and paddock, bareheaded, and called me from my housewifery to look at the promise of the apple-blossoms, and to listen to the thrush in the lilac-bush ; and little Philip can stretch out his hands for the daisies. The world is very good still. It is men who are bad ; but even they will grow good at last, and then the true Golden Age will have come, the rector says."

"Psalm 45th.—'Gird thee with thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, according to thy worship and renown.' My soldier hath marked this verse in the psalter in acknowledgment of the Captain of his salvation. May he be a shield over his soldier's head in the day of battle, and acknowledge him in the field of Armageddon."

"Psalm 21st.—'He asked life of thee, and thou gavest him a long life, even for ever and ever.' My boy, it was not the life for ever and ever that I asked for you then, nor did you ask it for yourself, my Phillip, for in our short sight you had much to live for. You were much wanted here, my son, my son. But the crown of pure gold yonder will make up for all the crowns of brass and iron here, and the felicity which is everlasting will atone a thousandfold for all the sweet human ties untimely blighted and nipped in the bud. The joy of His countenance, which maketh you

glad, my dear, dear lad—what sun on earth could shine like that smile of the Master's face? What king's, or conqueror's, or bridegroom's bliss could approach to the gladness of the royal, loving servant raised to that full light? Your mother would not grudge it to you, but that she is at once that strongest and weakest thing on earth—a mother."

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE LAST RELIC OF THE GALLEYS.

THE epidemic was abating at Sedge Pond, and Grand'mère had consented for a little space to rest and be thankful. She had sent Yolande abroad one evening to gather the herbs which were in the season of drying, while she herself dozed in her great chair. Suddenly she started up and rubbed her eyes. Her expression became one of mingled endurance, resolution, and triumphant faith, which made her features look young again with their air of early heroism.

"What is it, Philippine?" she asked quickly. "Have I dreamed. I could have sworn I heard the shots of the dragonnades once more—saw my brother Blaise led off with the rest of the gang, and received all that was left to me of the father of Hubert from the galleys."

"What wonder, Maman?" protested Philippine. "I am always thinking of those cruel mockings and scourgings, and of the sainted martyrs."

"But, my girl, I did not think I heard and saw the things with which I was familiar before you were born. What can it mean, my friend? Is it that my time is come, think you? Would God the little one were come home, that I might bless her with my last breath, if it be His will."

"No, no, thou wilt not leave us, *memère*," besought Philippine; "thou art all that is left us now of the good old times, and they were good in spite of their woes—when we were a spectacle to men and to angels, and the devil could find no fault in us. And now that we have left our first love, and cast in our lot with this Sodom of an England, thou wilt not abandon us and carry away all that we

still have of the faithful and the *patrie* at the bottom of our groaning hearts?"

"Ah! I have it," cried Grand'mère, springing up, almost as light of foot as a maiden; "console yourself, my Philippine, I may live to grow a babe again. It is not the nearness of death which is unlocking the closed chambers of memory; it is the face of my dear old M. Denis Landre, in the porch. Say not that I alone am left you, when, if he will deign to turn back his frills, you will see on the worn bones of eighty what ate into the tender flesh of sixteen. He is the last Reformed of the oars. He was chained to the benches for eighteen weary years. But he was young, kept his reason, and, escaping at last, came to this peaceful court of England, where he hath dwelt and labored nearly half a century. He is on his summer round to watch the habits of God's creatures, and win models from them for his art, and if you ever did honor to a hero, my reverent Philippine—if you would entertain, not the three Magi, but a soul come out of great tribulation, I tell you this will be the day for it."

By the time Yolande returned, Monsieur Landre had gone out with Monsieur Dupuy to make some arrangements for pursuing his studies in the neighborhood during the next week. It was in his absence that the girl heard the great news of his arrival. Her expectation had thus an interval in which to rise to the highest pitch before he re-appeared, and she should be presented in a tumult of awe and delight to the last living French Huguenot who, for conscience' sake, had undergone the burning, fiery furnace of the galleys, and had come out without a hair of his head injured.

To Yolande's intense amazement, and all but utter disappointment, Grand'mère's *beau ideal* was a little grey rabbit of a man, dressed punctiliously in a blue coat and laced red vest with flapped pockets, the latter bulging out incongruously with the stones, leaves, twigs, and skewered moths and beetles preserved in little boxes, for which he had a *penchant*. He pounced upon her before she had been well named to him, and charged her a little austerely with blind blundering in bringing a wrong herb to Grand'mère.

"That," said he, "is the *Lady-glove*, *gant de la dame*, *misé*, and a *campanule*, with which you have nothing to do. And you have gone and mistaken a great Marguerite

for a *souci*. *Ouf!* where are your eyes, then? In your pocket, or at the back of your hat, *hé?*"

Yolande, on her part, was almost disposed to ask him—Did the three Hebrew children not differ more from other Hebrews? Did they so outlive their supreme test and miraculous deliverance that they became only the foremost husbandmen, and builders of houses, and planters of vineyards, the foremost statesmen, and warriors, and bards of all the tribes throughout the strange land of Babylon? As for Monsieur Landre, he was absolutely silent when Madame Dupuy met him with a sounding apostrophe tremulous in its sincerity.

"It is thou, Monsieur, who hast defied the tyrant, whom the pains of hell could not turn from the truth, who preferrest the taskmaster's whip and the fires of the noonday sun to abjuring the Word. What are we that thou art come under this poor roof, among those who have done nothing, and who refuse any longer to believe any thing? What can I do to make you more welcome, Monsieur? Permit me to salute the hem of thy redingote, and lay the hairs of my head in thy path."

He remained blank to all direct appeals to his old experience, and put aside every bold attempt to enlist his convincing eloquence as the last survivor and eye-witness of the tortures linked with the dismal tragedy of the galleys, for the purpose of satisfying the craving curiosity and breathless interest of another generation. But he would discourse by the hour, and pour out hard words by the bushel, till his voice grew husky with the burden, on the most minute specimen of wall-rue, and the most insignificant fly curling up a cylinder for itself out of a rose-leaf. Or he and Grand'mère, with the tears in their eyes, would recall the noble old French Cathedrals, from which their faith excluded them, though their fathers had built them. They would speak, till the listeners grew weary, of the balconies with screens of carved leaves and flowers, second only to nature's festoons and garlands, which alternated with shields of armorial bearings before the hotels of the nobility in the cities and provincial towns.

Monsieur Landre was a quaint little *savant* and artist, ludicrously solemn and absorbed in his studies, without any of Monsieur's blandness, Madame's passion, Grand'mère's

imagination and fine sense, or Yolande's enthusiasm. A gruff, abrupt little man, with an exaggeration of self-respect and stoicism about him ; in fact, the most difficult man in the world to conceive chained to a bench and stripped to the waist, a blackened skeleton among rows of blackened skeletons, bending mechanically to the oar in a sickening drudgery of degraded toil, varied by a sharp encounter with the English frigates when the galley-slave's flesh was torn, and the life which he was driven to hate was let out by the English shot ; or if he escaped this, and was carried to the hospital a sorely-wounded man, he was still fettered to the bed on which he lay, because his stout heart could not believe in the celebration of the mass, and he would not bow his gaunt head at the elevation of the host.

When Yolande, after the two had retired to rest, complained to Grand'mère of the anomaly which the girl found in Monsieur Landre, Grand'mère tried to bring it within her comprehension.

" Dennis Angre Landre," she explained, " was never a sayer, but a doer ; and a breach as wide as the Red Sea lies between the two. For as many years as you have lived, my child, he was an exile in the foul mouths of harbors, and lying out on the same everlasting sea—birds and gross-eating fish soaring and swimming around him, and no change meeting him from day to day, and year to year, but the changing of the clouds, and of his harsh masters, the dropping off of his comrades, and the replacing of them by other worn faces."

" Yes, good Grand'mère ; but should such suffering not have put him above such trifles ?" asked Yolande.

" *Ouais !* I must finish. He makes his escape at last by a miracle of steadfastness and desperation, and hears that he has long been left an orphan without near kindred, and has lost all that he ever possessed of worldly goods. There is nothing left him here below but the green earth of God with its myriads of creatures, and the power of copying them, to which he had been in training when he was carried away. And Yolandette lifts her nose and wonders that he throws himself into the study of these things, and clings to them with the devotion of a lover to his mistress ! Denis Landre came back like a wild Orson, an outlaw. There were others who came back wilder still, their reason

lost, memory dead, and faith only feebly flickering and feeling after its object, until it should be changed into sight. Go! You are a pretty girl to ask why such a one, poor and true, and keenly sensitive to all the defects and privations of these endless years, should desire to remedy them—not by a woman's moans, and pets, and sour grapes, but by seeking anxiously to acquire and employ the habits and practices of civilized life, even to the wearing of a perruque and a cane. What would you have instead? Do men's tongues wag when the iron has entered into their souls? Do they not set their teeth; and are they not dumb for the rest of their days? In after years will they not shudder still, and turn their backs on the horrors of the past, as though on the ghastly *croquemort* of a dream? My word! the *petite* has gone to sleep on her woman's wit, to need such explanations. Why should she give herself the air of a sick cat because a great, good man—one of the best, bravest, and most modest I have known—is not a trumpeter of Gascony, a hero of the spectacle to please her? She does not know life, the *sabot*."

"Yes, Grand'mère, that is all true. I was a spoiled child, giving myself the air of buying sugar-plums at least. But tell me, had not Monsieur Hoadley right on his side, when he said there was nothing worth on earth but the saving of souls? These poor ones in the village here do but recover their stifled, poisoned breath, and turn their dim distorted eyes back to the world, when behold there comes a man who went through calamities which lasted a score of dreary years, to which theirs were light as straws. Do you tell me he survived these, and succeeded in leaving them all behind him, in order to give himself up to bagatelles of club-mosses and midges?"

"That depends. Is nothing in the universe of God worth considering save men and their souls? But agreed that men are best worth men's consideration; is there only one way of saving souls? Is there any thing common or unclean which God has put around man for the purpose of instructing him? Common or unclean! when every syllable on every page of God's book of nature reaches upward to a marvel of rarity, purity, and excellence? For what? The satisfaction of its Maker, since He regards all, and counts nothing beneath His notice? No more than this?"

They do not exist that He may be known in His works, that they may bear witness of Him, and that His saints may be perfected through them? How do you know that the growth of a flower or the life of the tiniest of God's creatures is not helpful for the growth of souls and the life of their life?"

"But to paint them upon plates and jugs, *ma mère*," argued Yolande; "to design little groups of cows drinking in a stream or lying lazily under a spreading tree for butter-dishes, and to paint shepherds and shepherdesses on vases, with garlands of oak-leaves studded with beetles to encircle them; to bend over the work, busy himself with it, and dream of it for days and days together—is it not a kind of idolatry, as Monsieur Hoadley says, and base and unworthy trifling for the last of the galley-slaves to demean himself with? *Fi fi done!* I cry with vexation, even but to think of it."

"Cry for yourself, my fine girl, a thousand times," protested Grand'mère; "as for Monsieur my young pastor and you, you are two very high and noble personages to be so far above the plates and the dishes! One of you has not been so long removed from the *bric-à-brac*; but that is the way of the *brouille*, and I am an ungenerous old *tête montée* to speak of it. For me, I believe that the doing of a thing well or ill, and not the special sanctity of the deed, is the proof of the hero, the saint, and, above all, the Huguenot; and that the question is not so much whether he erects a temple, or shapes a pair of pantaloons, as the world and the Church of Rome will have it. Let the potter turn but one cup in fair proportion, or let the painter re-produce one true image, and the world of homely men and women is so much the better for him. And what is a stanch, battered galley-slave, that he should despise small gains, so that they are honest and good, and won by the best exercise of his faculties? *Ma mie*, if you will see the day of great deeds, you must not despise the day of small things, whether first or last. There have been worse things than galleys; there have been scaffolds. And who mounted them? Preachers and teachers alone? Not at all—workmen, laborers, men and women, skilled like Bezaleel in the weaving of tapestry and the executing of jewelers' work. It is true that Palissy only quitted the fountains in the Italian's garden to languish

in the Bastille, but Goujon went straight from the torso in his *atelier*, to leave his own headless trunk stretched by the block."

"Say, then, Grand'mère, why Monsieur Hoadley, who used to be idle and vain himself among the *gentilhommes*, is to-day laborious as an ox and serious as the moon?"

"Can I tell you why Yolande is young?" answered Grand'mère, with a smile. "Monsieur the pastor is young also, and he works in the dashing spirit of re-action and reformation. He is a new broom, and sweeps clean: by and by he will be older and smoother, and will no longer tear both himself and the carpet. He will then give every one more of his due, be more tolerant, more charitable. And what then? The world will cry, 'Voild! Monsieur the pastor has grown weary, he has changed his mind once more.' Believe it not, his *camarade*. He was sick and sorry with all his heart, and he took an oath, from which the good God will not let him go back. He will be a man in his Christianity yet—though not so mellow a man as Monsieur Gage, or so strong a man as Monsieur Philip Rolle—but a man in his own fashion," Grand'mère went on, after considering within herself, "a little with tinged severity, perhaps because of his early slackness and sin, which found him out always—not a dragon as now."

"And I also am a dragon, Grand'mere?" demanded Yolande, with mock courtesy and a relieved smile; "I humbly beg pardon of Monsieur Landre, but will he never tell us what it was to be a martyr, and what the galleys were like? for otherwise I see not that we are any better of them."

"Have patience, my daughter," cried Grand'mère.

Then Yolande had patience, and consented to look no longer for a demi-god in Monsieur Landre, but rather to regard him as a poor, tried human being, who had suffered the loss of all things here, although he had fought the good fight and kept the faith; and who, in place of being infinitely raised above men's weaknesses, was full of the eccentricities, oddities, and cross-grainedness of isolated men. Then the girl was ready to admit that the passion of the old galley-slave for nature and art was child-like, self-forgetful, and not without its greatness. She saw that he was full of choice information as well as of zealous devotion to his studies, and that what he could impart was pleasant information to re-

ceive, and good to act upon, while one dwelt in this creation of the Great Worker, who sees "now a sparrow fall and now a world." She could detect that the reverent, painstaking student was filled with interest manifold in God's broad Book, therefore he never tired of turning over the leaves and of heartily copying in his materials what he had got at first hand.

And when Monsieur Landre was no longer, as it appeared to him, rudely pressed and impertinently assailed on his inhuman agonies and sorrows, he would allude to them briefly, but naturally, of his own accord, in a dreamy, abstracted, or a solemn, somewhat weird way, which made the slightest reference more impressive than the amplest details. "I have a stiffness here, Madame Dupuy *mère*," he said, touching his throat; "but no, I was not born with a crick in the neck. We were neck-chained once in the hospital at Dunkerque, and I could not turn my head for a month, though there was a pot with vanille in the window just beyond me. I smelled it, and, *tête-bleu!* how I wished to see it, and the swallows which I heard in the eaves. I saw them—never, psch! The pot was knocked down and broken, and the swallows took their flight to Africa the day before we were removed."

"Gangrene, madame?" he exclaimed. "Oui-da, we had enough of the gangrenes when the *argousins* would only remove the chains from the senseless bodies which they cast into the sea. We would have given—heaven and earth, I was going to say; but no, not heaven, all but heaven, my friends—to have been senseless for one day, one hour, when we carried tons weight of iron on bleeding, fractured limbs."

"Little dogs, *misé*," he told Yolande, with a shade of dry humor, "I love the little dogs. I am very happy that they were well-treated at your castle. Their name was once mine, and we are brothers, the little dogs and me. 'Dogs of Huguenots,' so they named us when one slave or another, educated by misery, got so clever under his education that he gave the slip to the chain and the bench, or when he grew mad and broke all his bones by leaping sheer over the bastion, and all the fellow-slaves on the benches nearest him were bastinadoed as no dog would have been."

"Oh! how cruel!" said Yolande, thoughtfully.

“ Bah! rest tranquil: the dogs who did it could not help themselves, they were made monsters of by the officers in authority over them, and they again by the great nobles and the ministers of state; and the priests told them all—and believed it themselves for the most part—that they were torturing us to save us, or at least other contumacious fellows like us, from perdition. It was a lie, but they believed it, and what would you have? If you were so unhappy as to believe that bastinadoing a man black and blue, or roasting him to a cinder, would save the undying soul of him for ever and ever, would you not try it? Faith of Denis Landre! I believe he would try it fast enough. Forgive? I have nothing to forgive. Do not speak of that, Madame; it was all a horrible mistake, and it is over—at least for us Huguenots. Often the guards and officers were sorry for us, and helped us with rags and water and wholesome food, as far as their discipline would permit. One of them, a Turk—positively a turbaned Mahomedan—remembered me, caught a rare *mirriflore* of a bird for me, dried and stuffed it of himself, and after keeping it for quite ten months, brought it and in full day slipped it along with a cluster of figs into my sleeve, gravely nodding his proud head and long beard as he did so, in the port of Marseilles.”

Doubtless what helped Yolande to a more correct estimation of Monsieur Landre, was the circumstance of young Caleb Gage’s coming across the Frenchman in his rambling exploration of the country. Though Mr. Hoadley had hastily and austerely condemned the old man, judging that his mind had become light and weak at the very least, Caleb Gage, on the contrary, struck up a friendship with him, Frenchman though he was; and conceiving an immense respect and admiration for the man of science, the skilled modeler and mechanician, waxed loud in his praise. And young Caleb had another, and for the moment a bigger, blacker crow to pluck with Grand’mère for excluding him from the Shottery Cottage, by her foolish Frenchwoman’s schemes, when a man was there who could have taught him so much, and from whom he would have been delighted to learn. Whether the world would ever honor Monsieur Landre as he deserved to be honored, or not, he had not only maintained his views of the right through worse than death, but Caleb felt the Frenchman would leave his mark

in another form on the world's treasures, and contribute another lesson to its store-house of testimonies.

Yolande, with her subtle instincts, apprehended Caleb Gage's appreciation of Monsieur Landre, and his inclination toward the *savant*; and it not only caused the girl, who secretly admired and reverenced the young squire, to become a docile, intelligent, eager disciple of the naturalist, who, like all right noble teachers, valued a docile, intelligent disciple, and exerted himself to meet her wants and pour into her thirsting mind rivulets from his own stream of knowledge; but it caused her to take a simple, pure, womanly pride in her association with Monsieur Landre, and in his friendship for her, the true child of Grand'mère. And Caleb Gage would have given his riding-whip and his hunting-boots, his fowling-piece and his fishing-rod, to have been the privileged partaker of the trouble Monsieur took with her, and of the acquisitions she was making in the branches of knowledge. Monsieur Landre, who was master in so much which the young squire prized, did not scorn the head and the heart which the tyro had rejected. Whether the day should ever come that Yolande would meet Caleb Gage on his own and Monsieur Landre's ground as an equal and more, was very doubtful; but come or come not, Grand'mère, Monsieur Landre, France, and womanhood should have no reason to blush for their child.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### FADING.

“AND now all the people love Grand'mère.” So Yolande ended an enthusiastic account of the doings of Grand'mère in a conversation which she had with Monsieur Landre, close upon their parting.

“Not *all* the people, my mademoiselle.”

“Yes, yes, Monsieur, all; for Grand'mère served all,” repeated Yolande proudly.

“The very worst motive for fickle people to act upon,” muttered Monsieur Landre. “Had it been because the people served Madame the Grand'mère, I should have had less fear.”

"Fear, Monsieur!" exclaimed Yolande making large eyes.  
"How fear?"

"I can not tell, but I love not popular *émeutes* either of wrath or gratitude. I mean that I trust them not. Gratitude—yes, that is a quality honorable and lovely—in a heart which knows its why and wherefore, wholesome as bread; but it is apt to be a simple *fureur*, like heady wine, given to ferment, in the unthinking and unstable heart of a crowd. It is in the tail of the mob which shouts 'hosanna' that the venom lies *perdu*. But I have done wrong to speak of such things when they can not be prevented. Behold, enough of them. Let us wait upon Providence, and the fortunes of France may come in. Who knows?"

Yolande was not satisfied, but felt uneasy. Monsieur Landre had set her thinking, and had shaken her faith in the regard felt by the villagers of Sedge Pond, which had been born and bred of favors all on one side. She knew that some of them had been brutal in their former lives, and she saw not a few of them returning, almost before the plague had flown, to their old evil habits. They were growing shy, too, of Grand'mère, and sulky, even to bearing a grudge against her who was a silent reproach to them, while she hardly ever spoke to find fault with any of those whom she had succored. She trusted, hoped, and waited for the fruit which might hang white and heavy, in place of the mildewed, poverty-stricken seed of her experience, when the place which knew her should know her no more. "If we but take a few hostages we have done well," cried the high-hearted old woman, cheerily, as she looked at the uncouth Deborah Pott and a few others. But the young woman was cruelly disappointed at the revival of the irreverent wakes, the bloody fights, the hard-drinking bouts, and also at the coolness and hostile feeling between the Shottery Cottage and its neighbors, now embittered by the blinding shadow of a wrong.

This disappointment to a nature like Yolande's, at once impulsive and introverted, the warning of Monsieur Landre, and the cessation of the pleasant and healthful lessons which she had got from him, either preyed on her health, or else a sudden failure of strength developed all the fear, distrust and dismay which were at the root of the girl's heart. This was the last lingering case of the illness bred of the sum-

mer's heat. It came on after the briony berries were hanging ripe in the hedges, and the leaves were crimson, orange, and grey by the wayside. Taking the individual forms of nervous prostration, wasting feverish fits, and aguish chills, Yolande's sickness was of a dangerous kind.

At its commencement, Yolande, who as yet had known nothing of disease, whose pure, pale cheek had been until now as perfectly healthful as the buxom red-rose faces of Milly and Dolly Rolle, was keenly alive to every sinking power and strange new pang; and while she showed a woman's endurance and meekness, she yet, with the swiftness of her age, sex, and simplicity, made up her mind that she should die.

It was hard to go away even to the good God and Father —to the blessed Saviour and Elder Brother, even though her childhood and youth had been passed in the shade of exile, among fugitives in a foreign country. Notwithstanding that her opening womanhood had received a blow which still thrilled it with a sense of tribulation, vague pain, and inextinguishable yearning, and though every other pulse of being was beating low, yet life was very sweet to her, as to other young creatures. It was hard to quit the fields she knew and the living things that dwelt in them just when she was learning every day to understand and prize them more and more; hard even to leave the villagers who would not abandon their shocking, shameful sins, although they had been saved by a great deliverance.

She felt it hard to part even from Deb, whose elaborate ministrations and their collapses made her still laugh weakly; and from Prie, whose softened harshness now made her cry. She thought with pensive tenderness of Monsieur, who would not miss her greatly, so long as he had the dear old mother, but who looked astonished and somewhat troubled at her coming before him in this matter of prematurely fading away. As for Madame, it grieved her to see her child; the mother's set face said little and much; her strung faculties seemed to need neither rest nor refreshment, and she scouted at sleep and food for herself, remaining a grim watcher and dumb suppliant against Death, who approached with the crashing step of a conqueror over what was mortal, though Christ had died, yea, was risen again.

Ah! and the tears rose to Yolande's eyes as she looked on Grand'mère, tender and true, bright with a tremulous brightness. For why should Grand'mère give way? Who should sustain the drooping spirit of her darling, if not she? Who should uphold, fan, and cherish the flickering flame of life till it revived, if not she? And should she be doomed to mourn for a short but awfully sharp separation, the time for mourning would come all too soon. But now, she would not sin against the long-suffering delicacy and modesty of true womanhood by untamed bursts of passion and the abandonment of anguish; she would not thus cloud the close of the young days, which might be running out faster than the river to the sea, nor rudely shake the golden sands of life by her sorrowing.

At first Yolande was full of pathetic care and longing sorrow for Grand'mère's chastened grief. "What will you do, Grand'mère?—what will you do?" was the constant cry, varied by fond, anxious plans of how Prie was to water the *jardinière*, and Deb to sleep on the mattress on the floor. *Memère* was to read other books than the Huguenot mem-oirs; Monsieur was to go no more journeys to London and Norwich; and Yolande would be almost satisfied if there could only be found an orphan child of the *émigrés* of Spitalfields or Canterbury for Grand'mère to call 'Yolandette,' to lead by the hand, caress, and bless. Then she would utter waking, startling cries:

"Oh, heavens! she is standing there still—is it not so? Why does no one bring the *fauteuil*? Sit down, dear Grand'mère; lay your cheek on the cushion, *là*, *là*; she has had no *goûter*. Why does no one mix the salad and pour out the almond milk? Eat and drink, Grand'mère; go into the garden, my heart, and see if the jasmine-tree is still powdered like a marquis, and if the walnuts are as big as beans, and if the Reine Clades are blushing, as they used to do in France."

So long as the excitement lasted, no fervent, steady, assurance of Grand'mère's could quiet the disorder of the earnest affections. She would say, "I shall do well, little one. I lean on the *fauteuil*; I eat and I drink. Shall I bring you a sprig of the jasmine, and lay it on your pillow? Fie! let not your checks shame it; let them grow less white, let

them grow round as a periwinkle, and pink as a Daphne, my girl."

But Yolande of herself soon drifted gradually into that second stage of illness when God's finger-touch calms the ruffled feelings, quiets the loving cares, and replaces them by passive submission so perfect that it might be taken for apathy, but for the conscious, deliberate surrender of responsibility, the transfer of trust to another, and the reverent appeal to God for all, save the bodily ailment—a submission which lifts the sufferer above the world.

And thus Yolande lay, removed from her friends, as all in sore sickness are, except from those who hover and cling round them, in the altogether unnatural and exceptional life of the sick-room, where prevails permanent twilight—something between the last sunset and the new day. All sounds are muffled and dull there, and all interests are concentrated in the spring which issues from one personality—a personality to all appearance fast ebbing and receding from the grasp of kindred personalities, like the last wave of a low sea in spring tide. Yolande lay thus, waiting till the question of life or death, which she had already answered for herself, should be decided by another tribunal where she had no voice.

The world without heard and apprehended that the young Frenchwoman of the Shottery Cottage lay a-dying. Regret was no doubt felt by some that they might never more see her forming a figure in the Watteau groups in the garden-bower, in the cottage-porch, or in the dark parlor, at which they had so often pointed clumsy fingers and scurrilously jeered. Some remorse would seize them as they thought of her relation to the past; for had not Yolande gone in and out among the people, and had she not caught the malady while minding their sick—though folk did say it had taken rather a queer turn in the foreigner, and was neither the falling sickness nor the putrid fever. Well-a-day, they were sorry for Mademzelle, that were they; she was so young to be taken, though she was most likely a Jesuit or a spy, at any price. Yes, Yolande had her mourners among the rough villagers; and as there is nothing like death for condoning offenses, magnifying merits, and crowning the wearer with a very nimbus of glory, it is more than probable that had Yolande died now she would

have escaped the tumult of sudden love subsiding and rebounding as suddenly into old deep-rooted aversion and disgust, and would have lived in the popular memory spiritualized as rude minds might have spiritualized her into the pale pitiful ghost of a young dead girl who had made up for being French by passing betimes to the great congress of nations, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor Scythian. Nay, her very memory might have been a medium for reconciling the enmity which had existed between her people and the people of Sedge Pond, having gone, with the good deeds toward her neighbors in her hand, straight to Him of whom the parson preached that his command ever was, "Love your enemies."

The sister of the brazen woman whose child Yolande had taken into her pure arms one day sauntered up to the Shottery Cottage gate, and defied the virtuous indignation of Priscille by persevering in her question as to how the young Madame was—a faint blush on her bold brow the while. The fellow of the bad man whose curses Grand'mère had not feared, and who cursed no more, but continued to cry mightily for a blessing upon her, so completely forgot himself and his horror of everlasting woe, that he went into the autumn fields to gather poppy-seeds and hop-berries to form a pillow, in order to procure an hour's sleep for the sick girl's restless head. Even at the ale-house, where the greatest jealousy existed against the frog-eating, grimacing foreigner, who, instead of contributing to the custom of the place, rather damaged it, fierce accusations and foul jests were for the time silenced. Indeed, the universal sentiment was—"Sin' the lass lies a-dying, we'll say nought again' them for the present. Let 'em a-be; we say, let 'em a-be; happen it may be our own turn next. We mun be decent, lads and lasses, in our nagging. Death wipes out the heaviest score."

Madame at the rectory, leaving her cherished solitude, came home from her sea-side refuge, and would have watched like a mother over Yolande for the sake of the old woman who had wept over Madam's Philip in his prime. She was scared, however, by the grim mother of Yolande, who would suffer no interloper by the bed where she stood sentry.

Milly and Dolly, those arrant cowards, not without an

overpowering horror of Yolande's ghost haunting them if they failed in their attention, ventured near the cottage armed with fever water, civets' tails, and camphor bags; but once on the spot they threw away the civets' tails and the camphor bags, and, seated on the outer stair, looked up at the darkened window and bemoaned Yolande like the companions of Jephtha's daughter. Notwithstanding this, however, Milly and Dolly kept Black Jasper riding to and fro between the rectory and Reedham, and Madame was at her wit's end with false alarms about attacks of the epidemic shown in tangible and bewildering symptoms for days and days together.

Mr. Lushington, with his cauliflower wig and noble calves, his person drooping and slouching in its gorgeous peach and scarlet, appeared at the Shottery Cottage, no longer with gifts of pigs' puddings and crab-apples, but shaking his powdered head ruefully, and holding his empty hands behind his back, saying huskily, "Who'd e'er have thought it? God have mercy on her! She's beyond we at this date, I take it."

But Yolande was not beyond the recognition of his voice, sonorous in its whisper; and she sent him a very girlish message, the glitter of her eye on fire, as she spoke, with the inward-burning fever.

Old Caleb Gage bent over Grand'mère's hand with the strangest and most wistful half-apology, not merely for himself, but for his God. "I am but a man, my dear old Madame. I can not tell a mother's heart, but my Lucy used to remind me that He whom we ignorantly worship is the great Father. In the name of the poorest and worst father here, I bid you remember that I love my boy not less, but more, when I elect him to a post of difficulty and danger, and bid him keep it, and suffer great things at it in his Father's name, and for his brethren's sake. And were God to bid him come up at once to his own mother, because there were far greater things for him to do with her yonder than any poor failures which he could make with me here, I would pray that, though I should die, I might not deny the right of Caleb's God and its wisdom and justice."

Grand'mère did not lose her meekness and faith then, although she shook and tottered on the brink of the grave herself. "Go, my friend, and pray that my faith fail not

also," she urged ; and, like Joseph among his brethren, contained herself till all should be over.

But there was a change upon her when Mr. Hoadley, with a faint tap at the door in the dead of night, came to her with the appearance of having been torn by wild horses or by seven devils. He described himself as having been engaged in fighting the "old man within him," and he had gone without either food or sleep as long as Madame had done ; but what a weak woman can do with comparative impunity drives many a strong man beside himself. Mr. Hoadley, by no means a strong man, had become possessed by an idea, grand enough in itself, for it was unearthly and devoted ; but he was the more tempted on that account to make a horrible Moloch of it, and, in grim and ghastly offering, to slay before it all his natural affections. He had been sleeping, so far as he had slept, and waking, in his parson's clothes during the crisis of Yolande's illness ; he had wrestled in prayer and paced over miles of road, trying desperately to walk down his doubts. But he received no comfort, because the honest love which had led him back to duty and to God he miscalled idolatrous and unregenerate. Thus slandering and stamping upon it, he was scorched to the bone with its struggling flames, and besprinkled with the ashes of its humiliation. No wonder, then, that he looked like a crazy creature when he found his way to Grand'mère, and addressed her with an unstifled groan.

"Woe to us, Madame," he began, "for we have made for ourselves an idol, and it shall be broken. I call upon you to repent, as I seek to repent, in the depths of my misery. I call upon you, her Grand'mère, to join with me in giving her up lest she should be spared to arise and work her own and our destruction, and to cover us with the degradation and shame of our idolatry. Behold the Bridegroom cometh ! let us go out with our virgin to meet Him."

Grand'mère stood up before Mr. Hoadley, and for almost the first time in her life forgot the mortal agony of another in her own sufferings. She denied the charge, and declared it was he who dishonored his God, and not she or her child.

"She was my child, and not my idol, man. God who has a father's heart, gave her to me, and we together returned our thanks to Him. He bade me love and not hate her. He even deigned to compare his love to mine. If you tell

me that I have not loved her sufficiently, I will believe you. If you say her God and Saviour want their little one, then I answer that I understand that, for I want her also; but it is right and necessary that my want should yield to theirs, though I should be bereft indeed. I see the necessity, and I will still cleave to the Giver and Taker, because in a very little time He will give back to an old woman the gift which was his originally, and which He counted so precious. But if you tell me she is an idol, and not an angel, and that she is smitten in order that I may be smitten, that I may be better by being mutilated, then I tell you, man, you speak the devil's lie, and not God's truth; you bear false witness against your God."

So with her feeble hands the old woman put the young man, the most confounded of the two, out of her presence and away from the sacred precincts of the sick-house.

Young Caleb Gage came not all through Yolande's grievous illness; and while she had little or no sense of the torture which would neither let Mr. Hoadley go nor stay, she had an abiding sense of Caleb Gage's absence. She was not, however, heavily offended, Grand'mère having long ago plucked the cankering sting of shame out of the girl's heart. Caleb had not met her friends' choice with his choice, and it was inevitable that he should stay away; only his staying away made death, as it had made life, all the wearier and drearier for the obligation. He went about his ordinary occupations and amusements. He was still his father's right-hand man, and superintended the draining and trenching at the Mall which had been recently begun; and he rode to market, and hunted and fished and shot as usual. But sometimes, on these days of brooding stillness, he would lie for hours and hours among the ling on the Waäste in the silence and solitude, or take shelter there amid the storms which in the woods herald the fall of the leaf. There was nothing to break in upon his engrossed senses save the drone of the bee; the crack and whirr of the grasshoppers among the bristling wild grass, the furze, and ragwort; or the wail of the plover in the grey distance. There was no sight to force itself on his abstracted eye save lonely savage nature which had not yet acknowledged man for its master.

It was not because the young squire was an intense lover and student of Nature that he withdrew at this time into

her retreats. He did not much care whether he meditated in a well-beloved resort like the Sedge Pond Waäste, or within barren stone walls. It was more endurable for him at intervals to go aside and confront the spectre which haunted him, saying plainly, "Here I am, do your worst; I shall stand it and seek no reprieve." What harm had he done, then? He had been led a dogged dance of sulky protest by a superannuated, fantastic old Frenchwoman, and that was all. Nay, he could abuse and make light of Grand'mère no longer, not even in the safe secrecy of his own thoughts, when he knew that the poor old soul was hanging over the death-bed of her darling.

As for that figure which rose up before him in the most unlikely places, haunting and harassing him in the half foreign elegance and daintiness of the sober brocade, in the stately sweep of the train which never encumbered the youthful trip of the feet, and the dark hair and eyes, the pearly cheek, and the meditative mouth, Caleb Gage could make nothing of it. Only this he knew, he could not go on bearing malice against such unmistakable gifts and graces, because of a bad and impertinent French precedent. He had insisted upon resolutely turning his back upon beauty of person and character, while now it seemed these were doomed to shrivel up and wither in their bud more speedily than even the grass of the field. How could he help asking himself, like the rest of the besotted world of Sedge Pond, Why had it come to this? Was there no help for it? How would it have been if the event had been different? Had his young wife or his plighted bride been wasting and waning like this harvest moon, how would it have affected him? And this Yolande had never seen her full lustre, but was dying out in her first quarter. He wished now that he had not been so hasty and ungenerous—that he had been wise enough not to have taken the overture at the first word, overwhelming the friendly contracting parties with confusion and consternation. Of course he was not called upon to marry when and whom his father—good and reasonable though he was—and the old Madame, who had pitifully burned her fingers, thought fit; but then he might have gone more graciously about his objections. What did Yolande think of his contumely? Had it hurt her in her sweetness; for they said, and he believed, that she was sweet? Had she in her superiority cared

for him the least, been inclined to stoop to such a snarling lout as he, who could not be so magnanimous as to make allowances for foreign ways and manners, but must needs appear to impugn the perfect modesty and delicacy which the greatest boor she had tended at Sedge Pond would have guarded as he would a lily in its sheath? Indeed he would far liefer have been the veriest boor of them all, than have so wronged any woman. And now had the very flower of womankind regarded him, not as a matter of expediency, but softly and kindly in her coyness, her French maidenliness, and been so rewarded? Where was the use of his asking? He should never know what had been worth the world to know, if he had not been ill-conditioned, and other people, the best of them, had not bungled and blundered. Where was the use of his contrition? She would never know; she was dying in her chamber in the Shottery Cottage, ministered to by Parson Hoadley, who had valued her; and the death of the noblest, sweetest woman in the world would lie at his door, even though he would willingly have died to save her.

So the days went on, till the day of thanksgiving and rejoicing, when in the little world of Sedge Pond it seemed as if the sun all at once broke through a dense dark mist, dispelling the doleful shadows. More than one man and woman woke up as from a bad dream. They went out and shook themselves like Samson, not thinking that the Spirit of the Lord might have departed from them, but rather wondering and smiling at their melancholy and their folly, returning with a will to former lines of conduct. Yolande, too, raised herself, very weak and faint, a very atom of a girl; but with all the difference between death and life in her looks and speech, and with earthly hope re-kindled in her languid eye.

"But I do think I am better, Grand'mère," whispered the girl. "I shall walk abroad with you again, after all; I who thought never to do it more. *Petite mère*, I am glad, and you also, all of you are glad. And you, who are not only wiser and purer, but stronger than I, do you render thanks to God for me to-day, and we shall pay our vows together when my sicknesses and infirmities are all gone."

Grand'mère, in her own mode, rendered thanks in her innermost chamber. She broke down utterly, and beat upon her breast at last, with a passionate protest:

“ What am I, unworthy wretch, to receive so many great mercies, when others cry in vain, and stretch out their hands all day long, and still death breaks down their barrier and bears away the heart of their hearts to the dark grave and the unseen spirit world ? Lord, Thy presence-chamber is yonder, but Thy creatures are here, and they love their fellow-creatures whom Thou hast given them ; and when Thou takest them away without ruth or stay, poor human hearts would die within them were it not that there is One who was lost and is found again. And He was no prodigal son, but the true *bien-aimé* of the Father. So they will go to their lost, and find them in the end, though their lost will not come back to them. My God, did the widow of Sarepta stand silent before the other widows whose sons and daughters came no more into their bosoms, abase herself because of them, and weep sore for them ? Lord, if I ever forget that those whom Thou hast smitten are among the apples of Thine eye, because even the sinful human mother’s heart yearns most over her suffering child—then, Lord, forget me in my need. When we wish to hang our dogs we say they are mad ; and when we wish to justify Thy mysterious ways to men, and to trade upon them for our own base profit, we slander Thy afflicted, and try to get our own of retaliation and revenge out of them. But thou dost not want our villainous justifying, and Thou hatest our cruel kindness. Lord, if I am ever spiteful, malicious, and harsh toward Thy wounded ones—if I presume to treat with a high hand their groaning impatience, their sick waywardness, their sore desperation as the false friends of Job dealt with the woes of Thy servant of old—if I count up their offenses and think to visit them on the offenders, and cause them to pay double for their sins in the day of their trouble, because their God is stripping and making them poor, that He may make them and many more rich—if I dare to sit in judgment on Thy miserables—then Lord, smite me and strip me, before I lose altogether the image of my Maker, and go into a place of sterner punishment.”

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## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE HONORABLE GEORGE'S TRAVELING CHARIOT.

THE dusky green of July and August had waxed and waned into the ruddy brown of October. The leaf-fingers of the chestnut, like the fists of a miser, were yellowing and shriveling round the rich mahogany-tinted nuts ; the beech-trees were masses of crimson and scarlet in the low slanting sunbeams ; while the few corn-fields among the pasture-lands, now reduced to stubble, were crackling under the feet of sportsmen. These effects of color were dazzling and garish to Grand'mère, whose eyes had been early trained to the cool darkness of the pine and the dim blueness of the olive ; but Yolande, with the affluence and elasticity of young life, was able to go abroad again, and even to face the slight sting of frost which made healthful the mellow air.

There was little inward change in the girl, save that with the enthusiasm of a prisoner or an invalid on his return to the free open world, she had a double relish for hardy outdoor life and simple country pursuits. There was greater outward change. The blood, beginning to course afresh in the thin white cheeks, flushed them with a quickness and ardor, and tinged them with a brilliance which had not before lit up the subdued tone of her complexion. The formal roll of hair, in the fashion of Grand'mère's silver roll, had given place to the short, dark clusters which were all the fever had left on the shapely head. No round-eared cap with dominant, imposing ribbon bow (though Yolande had added to this portion of her dress a starched ruff and tucker) could accord to these clusters the old, becoming air of sober wisdom and dignity. And what, indeed, if Yolande, grave and shy as she used to be, was a little thoughtless in the intoxication of her release from heavy discipline, and the thankfulness and cheerfulness of her convalescence ! She was pretty sure to come to her senses speedily, and to go on more sedately than ever, with only a little more humility and a little more forbearance for others—a brighter checker in her humor for all time to come, because of this short season of mirth of

spirit which was like to verge on giddiness. Neither Grand'mère, nor even Madame herself, could find it in her heart to check Yolande sharply, and to put a stop to what was beneficial for the confirmation of her health before the severe gloomy English winter set in. Indeed, the older women at the Shottery Cottage were shaken out of their bland and austere rigidity by the dispensation of sickness. They would let the younger woman run off out of their sight on long walks and varied excursions, into the lanes for blackberries, among the hazels for filberts, and along sandy tracts of the Wäste for wild liquorice-roots, in no better company and with no greater protection than that of Milly Rolle, who had struck up a devoted friendship for Mademoiselle on her restoration to Sedge Pond society. Not even the return and brief sojourn of the family at the castle could shake Milly's sudden passion for a bosom friend, by recalling her to her sworn allegiance to my lady. So Dolly, with the occasional assistance of Madam at the rectory, was left alone to serve Lady Rolle, who never looked near the Shottery Cottage, conducting herself as if her tenants there had been entirely brushed from her mind. "And a mighty good thing they were so, and not turned out of the cottage at twelve o'clock some stormy night, right into the sloppy village street," his honor, Mr. Lushington, was heard to cogitate.

Grand'mère was touched by the late-come fancy of one of the rectory girls for a Dupuy.

"The poor red and white thing," she would soliloquize, "she grows up tender as that dear duck of a girl Deb, and that kind black dog Jasper. I love them all; and my Yolande loves, and is loved by them also, and becomes so much more human and sweet, so much less of a reserved, ascetic Protestant nun. For me, I like good ordinary girls, unassuming and unconscious, even with the faults of girls, like primroses and daisies with earth-stains upon them, and not spoiled nuns, with pinched poverty of nature here, and rank passions there, like the twisted monstrous cacti of Mexico. As all the waters run together, and meet in the river, so girls ought to run together, and meet in the humanity which grows and grows till its top reach the skies. There will be no confusion of tongues to break in upon and scatter it again, because of one tongue which

spake as never man spake, and speaking once, speaks forever. Neither will it be a perfect humanity of atoms and entities, but of all the families of the earth, where the girls will be girls, and the old women old women. I believe it, I hope it. It is not the usage of France, but for me I have not much more fear of the promenades of the *fillettes* than of the horse-gallop of the *garçon*. I ought to have less when the last is often a grand gallop to the hospital. The girls will card and color each other as the French calico weavers on the Thames and at Bromley Hall bend their threads of flax, to form one fair pattern. Go! beat the parquet with the truth, unless it is reflected in the mirror of a fellow-face. The red and white Milly is more interesting, and yet more *distrait*, than she used to be—she is not such a mere spoiled child. The *petite*, again, is more of a child growing downward or backward, instead of upward. But truly she can afford that, the wise child, and the price pays the piper. Better to spread out bushy and strong than to spring up into a maypole. *Là, là, old Géneviève, thou knowest it well.* Chase away nature tripping on two feet, and behold she will come back racing on four."

But Grand'mère was more than dissatisfied, she was displeased and apprehensive, when she learned from Yolande, who was discomfited and troubled in her turn, that when the two younger women were out in their mantles and capuchins, their little baskets over their gloved arms, they were apt to meet Mr. George, from the castle, in the most unexpected ways, and in the most opposite, unlikely directions. At least they were unlikely directions for a gentleman who, when at the castle on former occasions, had been wont only to stroll in sleepy elegance toward the bridge about sunset, for the laudable purpose of affording the modicum of exercise necessary to his small friend and dog, or to saunter down, earlier in the day, to make the frequenters of the ale-house proud by looking on, and laying a bet on bowls and balls, to keep up his skill.

"You make no more promenades, whatever English modes may be," cried Grand'mère, decisively, and somewhat tartly for her.

"But he is at present quite respectful and gentle, Grand'mère," protested Yolande, puzzled and almost affronted. "Monsieur from the castle says no longer 'little Dupuy,'

but 'my very good mademoiselle.' He no longer picks up the trains—he carries only the baskets; though, do you know," she went on, whispering mysteriously, and with bashful importance, "he is the friend of Milly, as I think."

"A friend in truth!" exclaimed Grand'mère in increased indignation, under which she veiled her alarm. "I tell you that you make no more promenades, and I go to speak to the rector about the friend of his daughter."

"Oh, what have I done?" urged Yolande in lively distress. "Milly will be in anguish, and so will I, because I shall have told tales on her, who has begun to have so much kindness toward me. They are tales, if not fancies, for she denies that she has any thing to do with milord, and she promises, if I am afraid, that she will never speak to him, nor let him come near us again, till he ask the permission of Monsieur the rector. Do you understand, my good Grand'mère? It will be an afternoon of misfortune if you do not, and go and make your naughty child a pie of a tell-tale and slanderer of her friend. Trust to Milly, Grand'mère—you who are so full of trust and generosity. You have suffered me to go about the village with that Monsieur Richard—that young pastor," she added, with a little sarcastic emphasis; "where, then, is the difference, when Milly has been brought up with Mr. George, as one may say, and when my lady his mother is her patroness and kinswoman? She is the next person who will be offended. *Misericorde!* I shall speak to Milly myself, if you wish it; I shall not cross the threshold of the cottage, but shall watch my poor friend from the window of the garret, if that will do any good, and if you will not inform Monsieur, the Spartan father, whom Milly fears so terribly, though she loves him dearly."

Grand'mère saw that there was some reason in Yolande's remonstrance, and at the same time the old Frenchwoman had a modest sense that she could not be a perfect judge of manners in England. She let her better wit sleep, and refrained from farther interference in the matter, except what had to do with keeping her own child at home till the great Rolles should be off the *tapis*.

Grand'mère was confirmed in her forbearance by knowing that Milly Rolle was either prudently confining herself within the bounds of the rectory, or was content to dawdle

away her time and hang disconsolately with Yolande over their samplers in the porch of the Shottery Cottage. When they were not thus engaged they paced with arms intertwined, round and round the narrow walk by the fish-pond. Grand'mère songht rather to warn the girls indirectly, while she amused them by queer proverbs, and by the invariable French legend of a wandering, impossibly beautiful, and benevolent princess, beset for the nonce by troops of wolves, each wolf taking the form of a light-headed, regardless fine gentleman.

Notwithstanding this, Grand'mère in her own person had something of the fool of quality, and was easily persuaded to discredit the existence of evil unless there was proof positive of the grievous fact. When Mr. George wound up his supposed meditation of mischief by paying unexpectedly a ceremonious visit to Grand'mère, the infatuated Huguenot *bourgeois* and Christian gentlewoman could not yet regard it as a piece of effrontery and an undue liberty, but took it for what he did not even pretend it to be—an atoning duty to wipe out his mother's desertion and condemnation. It would not have signified much what face Grand'mère had put on Mr. George's attention, unless her obstinate single-heartedness could have worked a miracle in piercing the thick skin of overweening vanity in the man. In defense of Grand'mère's security, it may be said that so far as Mr. George's deportment and conversation during his visit went, he might have hoodwinked Solomon himself, from the perfect inoffensiveness of his bearing and his topics, though they did not range so far as from sleave-silk to predestinations, but merely from chip hats to tambour needles.

Grand'mère looking at and listening to the easy good-breeding of the slim, polished speaker, was inspired with the ambition of showing herself a genuine lady of the essence of Huguenotism and Christianity, since she represented the Household, Monsieur being shut up in his cabinet, Yolande sent out of sight, and Madame's hostility having become more and more of a mania. She could not think that there could be much in the *débonnaire* companionship any more than that force dwelt in the delicate hands with the five-pound ruffles fluttering over the knuckles. As the hands tapped the jeweled snuff-box, its very

lid conveyed a prettily-concocted pinch of flattery, for it bore the choice miniature in enamel of the Duchess de Longueville, Grand'mère's loveliest countrywoman, who became a Jansenist, if not a Huguenot. Grand'mère could have descended by the hour on the poor storm-torn rose of the Fronde wars; and when the enthusiastic old woman found that Mr. George was making a rare collection of such miniatures to hand him down to future generations as an exquisite virtuoso, she readily undertook to procure him a priceless likeness of a Magdalene in a king's court, in Louise la Vallière. George Rolle would take "the goose," with Grand'mère's own ewe lamb to the bargain, if with all his idle prowling he could beguile to destruction a silly little animal. And Grand'mère was assailed on her weak side, and all her suspicions were lulled to sleep. As the best of us are apt to do in similar cases, she forgot that there was evidence—awful overwhelming evidence—that these fine hands would grip like claws, for the individual, and for the order, insolently and relentlessly, without stint or measure. These were the hands of languid, fantastic, corrupt giants, not of puny dwarfs, as some have imagined.

At length the happy day arrived when the Rolles took their departure from the great arrogant white blot of a castle till the next election. My lady, the ruling passion strong in her leave-taking, chose to turn over her coaches to her sons for the present journey, and to make the journey herself by slow stages in her chair; for to be borne all the way to town, not by horses, but by men, was something novel, and fell in with her ladyship's mood.

Grand'mère had certainly a lucid interval in the delusion which was on the eve of receiving its death-blow; she breathed more freely when she heard that the progress of the quality was past and gone; she hummed "Marlbrook" in her shaking voice; and granted Yolande *carte blanche* to run out with Milly Rolle beyond the Shottery Cottage garden-gate and the Sedge Pond village street.

That evening she went herself to call the children to supper, and walked as far as the garden-gate, to which old Squire Gage had come reading, as he rode, escorted by his goodly son, a summer agone. The scene recalled to Grand'mère's mind, as freely as yesterday, the group which had at

first taken her fancy, and, as she paced up and down the short walk, she considered the disastrous blunder which she had made. Not, that Grand'mère recognized the blunder; on the contrary, "It was the marriage the most *convenable*, the couple the most felicitous. I never had a happier idea," pondered the innocent offender.

The girls loitered, but Grand'mère did not weary. It was their time to loiter, as it was that of the last quinces to fall, the beet-root leaves to change to a purple-black, and the brown autumn wall-flower and pale lilac and white leafless crocuses to offer rich, heavy floral incense, or wistful floral weeds for the year which was a-dying.

Grand'mère had a heart to hold all the seasons, though she loved the spring best, and looked a little pensively and shrinkingly on the autumn, because of the coming winter, with its nipping blasts, stark frosts, and winding-sheet of snow. For the old, however meek and resigned, want the images of life, and not those of death, and turn instinctively from the cold to the heat, from the shadow for which there is no longer need, to the sunshine which can not bask broadly enough for them. But Grand'mère perfectly understood and submitted to the fact that, while the budding hope of spring was for her consolation, Yolande in her own spring must be unsympathetic, and must stretch after the distant and unknown, delighting in fulfilled bounty and brooding repose. She could pace the garden road contentedly with Madame Rougeole as a safe recipient for an occasional soliloquy. She did not wonder that the empty harvest-fields, with their purpose now finished and forsaken, had no sadness for Yolande, and that she could stay and chatter with Milly Rolle, as the mist rose from the slow river, carrying hoariness to the very uplands of the Waäste, and bearing nothing but the seeded stalks of heath-flowers, inasmuch as her foot had trod swiftly among the cuckoo-flowers and the oxslips where they wafted the sweeter breath, and were the more richly golden for pearls of May dew. Grand'mère's thoughts were all tranquil and happy. Even when they turned to the spread supper-table within the house, it was with a pleasant recognition of the security, sufficiency, and domestic joy which were associated with the homely images of strings of roasted birds and rows of fried trout, and such Médoc as could be got in England, to replace indifferently

the brown ale; with the jauntiness of Monsieur and the sombreness of Madame both tempered to Grand'mère by the strongest, simplest devotion, and with the light of Yolande's young face and the sociality of Milly Rolle's rattling tongue.

A hurried tap came to the garden-door, and Grand'mère cried gayly, "Who goes there? Enter the grand Mademoiselle," though she knew the shuffling step was only that of Deborah Pott, who had come seeking Mademoiselle Yolande to look over her task of burnishing the pewter vessels in the house before they should be submitted to the lynx eyes of Prie. Indeed, to relieve Deb's oppression and anxiety more than her own, Grand'mère had dispatched the girl to look out for her young mistress.

But when Deborah appeared with all her new garments flying behind her, her very hair standing on end and streaming back from her shock head under her loosened cap, with her ungainly arms swinging, her splay feet clattering, her teeth chattering, and the horror of her news bursting from her fixed eyes as well as her quivering lips, Grand'mère was arrested and petrified.

"Murder!—murder! old Madame!" struggled out Deb, in explanation; "young madam—both the young madams be carried away and undone."

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE SHOTTERY COTTAGE AT BAY.

"A SEE'D them with my own eyes," Deb went on to account for her wild statement, "a-walking and a-talking and a-laughing like childer, coming down Pedlar's Lane with their hands full o' trash. When right a'foot o' the lane, there was summut under the split elm, what a' took for a wagon, but it proved no wagon, nobbut a charyot. And out of it sprang a tall man as thof he were awaiting for the young mistresses, and he spread out his arms and stopped the passengers. Hey! but they fell a-cryin' and a-tryin' to pass him, leastways our young madam, as put out her bits of hands and pushed him back, a' ne'er thought she had such force."

"*Tiens!*" cried Grand'mère, with a flash from her grey

eyes ; " and you did not fly to her, and fight for her ! She went to you, my big girl."

" A'd a gone as sure as deeth," protested Deb, " thof a'd a-been smashed and brained and hanged and quartered ; but with that, driver and postboys came swarming out from the charyot and the elm. One 'hind and the rest afore, and closed the lasses round, while my gentleman lifted and dragged them intil charyot. And off they drove afore a poor body would say, ' By your leave.' You believe me, Madam Grand'mère ? More by token an' a' had not bidden still, there would have been none to run with the bad news and give the alarm."

Grand'mère took no comfort from the conclusion, and failed to commend Deb for her discretion. She forgot every thing in her deadly sickness at this greatest calamity which had befallen her—a calamity to which death itself would have been light.

" The Monsieur, the gentleman ! Speak, child, and kill me ! It was some stranger, some audacious traveler for a frolic. *Ouidà*, the girls will be free again before this ; they will be skipping home to us now. But it was a bad jest, without doubt, still only a jest ; it was not—"

" Dunnot take on so," besought the commiserating Deb. " Now, I'se tell you all, and not keep you waiting. It were one of our own quality, more's the pity, as left the castle yesterday. T'were Mr. George hissen. A' know'd him by's clean-scraped cheeks, like a black-a-vis'd wench's, by the color of's sodgering coat, and the black ribbon round's neck ; t'other's older and stouter, and wears a cravat, and a' know'd him by's own man Master Harry, as wears the two watches and—waly ! is the loosest liver in the parish—after my lord, and my lord's brother."

" A place of dragons !" cried poor Grand'mère, putting out her hand, and feeling her way back to the house, as if she had been sun-struck in the cool autumn sunset. " Go, girl," she continued, " go to the rectory—and tell the pastor his daughter is gone, how, and with whom. He is not an old woman, a stranger and a foreigner like me ; he may lead a pursuit, and my son will follow when he returns from the *veloutière*—ah ! what say I ?—from the Waäste, where he went to shoot the little birds. He will feel fätherly now that his stock is smitten at the core He has his

honor, his human feeling, under his scheming trader's and *émigré*'s skin. And my little bird, saved from the bolt of the destroyer only to fall into the snare of the fowler, and to die twice over, dishonored and murdered! Did I keep the child cruelly for this? My selfish greed of her, is it thus heavily punished? Would to God I had died for thee, Yolandette! Would to God thou hadst died singly, securely, in the house of thy father, tended by thy mother!"

Bear in mind that these "good old times" which Wesley and Whitfield, and at a later date Wilberforce, troubled, as the prophet Elijah troubled Israel, were times when the carrying off of women, and the hiding of them in lonely houses and remote inns, were crimes actually possible and occasionally practiced in England. Single acts of barbarous unrighteousness and brutality remained to impress upon men how gradual is the civilization and Christianization of a nation—how men may hang up their broadswords and stab with walking-rapiers, how great towns may be taken and not put to a general sack, and solitary weak women may be decoyed or lifted away by force from the seclusion of paneled parlors and the publicity of tea-gardens, to be cast out at last like dogs. It was a far more frightful blow for an honest man and woman to hear that a young daughter had been seized by the violence of man and whirled off in a chariot, than that she had quietly sickened and died by the visitation of God. If she had been stopped on a lonely by-way, a rescue was hardly to be expected; if on a frequented high-road, a hundred idle tongues would be set a-wagging, and would babble away the good name and the fair fame, which a breath could sully, past redemption in this world. At the best, when the last unspeakable wrong was escaped, it was with the bloom and the dew of what should have been a sacred frankness and fearlessness of girlhood gone forever. No lot was left to the victim but either to hang her head and pine for her misfortune, or to brazen out its disgrace until the ill name hanged the poor dog driven desperate, or the brand ate into and tainted the soul itself, and what had begun in harsh slander ended in actual wickedness. Sooner would the fondest father and mother, not sold to the vile tampering with evil and the base time-serving which

characterized the "good old times" on their worst side—sooner would they have consented to see the favorite daughter, the house-pet, lying a stony figure on her bier.

France was not so different from England in this respect that Grand'mère did not comprehend the full bearing of the truth. She could not but cry, "Would to God I had died, or Yolande had been suffered to die when the innocent death of girlhood was at the door, rather than have lived to awaken the cruel fancy of a fine gentleman!"

When the awful news spread, it was not Monsieur, but the rector, who was found to be from home. He was away preaching an assize sermon, thirty miles off, at the nick of time when one of his cherished daughters had become the prey of worse than a highwayman. Her sister Dolly was hardly more astounded, incredulous, helpless, and hysterical than was Madam her mother, when the primitive messenger rushed past Black Jasper with his solemn marshaling, and without pause or preparation did her best to drop a shell into the rectory parlor, where Madam was no more appropriately occupied than seeking to win Dolly from a fit of moping by a dish of chocolate.

"An it please you, Pearson's Madam—and I'se warrant it will please none of you," began Deb, with an ominous shake to her unruly apron and voluminous cap—"Mistress Milly, as is thick with our young madam at the Shottery Cottage, be run off with, along with t'other, this here blessed sundown, a'foot o' Pedlar's Lane, and I be sent to tell you."

"Alake! alake! my Milly, and papa from home; but sit you quiet, my Dolly," got out poor Madam, distractedly. "What harm have the horses done the girls? I have cordials and linen at hand. Conduct me to my child, my good girl; this faintness will go as soon as I have set eyes on her."

"Anan! There be no horse in the play, saving the horses in the charyot, and they were drove by worser than horses, marm—by wicked men. Mr. George from the castle, he had a hand in the running off with the young madams. A's take my Bible oath on what a' see'd. But as to leading you to the hiding hole—it were not the eastle—he knowed a better trick than that, and he bade driver take the opposite road. To find that's the pother,

Madam; and that's what we are in the pickle about to-night at the Shottery Cottage. Old madam had howped as how Pearson were the man to raise the hue and cry—his own daughter being gone and done for."

Milly to be run off with by Mr. George, on her return from the most ordinary country tramp!—this was a new and thoroughly bewildering light thrown on an accident. Surely, if the story were true, it could only be in the way of the noblest promotion to Milly, though the banns had not been published, and my lady would cut the rash couple dead, and not hesitate to implicate, in the unjestest manner, and thenceforth to hate and persecute cruelly, the whole rectory family.

Notwithstanding these depressing considerations, the devoted, silly woman—good and gentle as she was—was ready to plume herself on her daughter's runaway match with a member of the proudest quality. But there were drawbacks to this conviction. It was odd and incongruous somehow to think of Mr. George as one of a passionate, imprudent young couple. Madam at the rectory was not slow in believing the most extravagant compliment to her daughter's charms; but Mr. George had not been any way conspicuous in his languid mocking attentions to his rustic kinswoman, unless whispering to her once or twice in corners during his last visit to the castle were to take the place of the elaborate courtships Madam had been accustomed to. Then what of little Dupuy, the French ma'mselle, whose concern in the scandal Madam had at first forgotten, but whose presence, when she recalled it, was an additional stumbling-block to a satisfactory explanation of the mystery? What was to be made of her? Was it necessary to spirit her from the scene, create a greater sensation, and complicate the matter for the mere purpose of doing honor to Milly's foolish liking for her by electing her to be witness and best maid on the interesting occasion, in room of the pouting, flouncing Dolly? And, oh dear! if Milly were mad enough, and the Honorable George bad enough, simply to drive about the country to show themselves to the public, without any more proper protector and companion than Milly's French friend! In this light the calamity was infinitely worse than the failure in the summer dish of gooseberry fool, or the tearing of the rector's surplice. It

would be beyond Madam's power, even if it came within her duty, to conceal this scrape from the rector. For once in her life the timid, distraught, ignorant lady would soundly rate her dear girl, Milly, had she but her tongue on her again.

At the Shottery Cottage the dreadful disaster which had befallen the Dupuy family worked in the peculiar way adversity sometimes works in turning the world of character upside down, and doing away with previous impressions.

To begin with the kitchen. Big Prie, having resisted the first frantic inclination to set out after the most monstrous of robbers, subsided tamely into a shocked, appalled elderly woman, shaking all over, and even whimpering feebly for the loss of generous, guileless young Madame. She left it to the young blood of the raw Deb Pott to rise to the occasion, and show a genius not only for open-eyed observation, but for staunch adherence to a trail, and daring excursions right and left to authenticate it. If Deb did not rise like a *phœnix*, certainly in one single hour she was drawn from her slough of brutal ignorance into an uncouth but very genuine woman; the orphan and drudge was transplanted into the solid if somewhat rough ground-work of a good, faithful, rudely-sagacious creature. Prie, who in her gaunt gruffness could not bend or mold to new requirements, or create resources for unthought-of necessities, at once, by the law of nature, succumbed and deferred. But it must be said she was too miserable about the daughter of the house to be jealous of the elevation of her subordinate. She only dully wondered at "her as couldn't ha' telled her right hand from her left, or a farthing candle from a four-penny mold, growing so spry all of a sudden." Now and then she would give a fling of aimless, peevish rage when Deb, who was stolid and coarse though honest, and had the making of a noble woman in her, dared, with gross want of delicate tact, to compare their pure, kidnapped, concealed ma'mselle to the wretched women (and Deb had heard of many of them even in her short life) who, with scant ceremony and charity, were sentenced to a fatally blighted life.

Madame Dupuy was passive, and stricken dumb in her insulted and outraged womanhood. Her thunder had been all spent in the fine weather, so that there was no strength

left in her for the storm ; she did not reproach Grand'mère with short-sighted magnanimity, she did not even denounce the perfidious English and the licentious quality : she reviled the world and reflected on Providence no more.

It was Monsieur, the man of the world, the cynical philosopher, whose sallow cheek grew green, grew black, who stormed and foamed and turned his back, and wept hot tears like sparks of fire. “ The mother’s child, the old woman’s darling, her picture if we lost her—and I was not there to save the little one ! But I will have justice *coute que coute*. I know, though I am a *roturier* of a Huguenot tradesman, that there is one justice for the quality and another for the commonalty in this fine country of England. But there is justice, such as it is, and the quality are left to themselves sometimes, and cry *halte là !* at each other’s sins, and hold them up to open punishment.”

It was Grand’mère, the sweet-tempered, buoyant-spirited old gentlewoman, whose brave heart failed her, whose tender conscience told her terrible things, whose firm faith reeled under the shock. Grand’mère took cognizance of all her own confiding rashness which had set at nought the mother’s jealous foresight and stern precaution, what she called her *romanesque* folly, which had brought ruin to her family. She knew that Monsieur could not be silent on his injury, but was forced to make grievous explanations and furious inquiries, and with her quick wit she saw that the world of Sedge Pond did him monstrous wrong. Because he was yellow and sodden in his heaviness, instead of bluff and hearty, because his expletives were safely strange and incomprehensible, and his best English accent worse than that of any Welshman or Scotchman, because his spluttering frenzy was in as great a contrast to what would have been a John Bull’s choking dignity as it was to his own wonted half-sardonic blandness—because of all this, the villagers thrust their tongues into their cheeks, and derided the unhappy man. With a brutal irreverence for human nature and infidelity to it, they called the whole story a French manœuvre ; and for Yolande, who had been their sister of charity, and over whom, when they thought her on her death-bed, they had shaken their heads with some stupid approach to awe and tenderness, they now called her a French slut ; and the only person to be pitied in their view of the affair

was the idle, set-up hussy, the parson's daughter, who would go gadding in indifferent company.

This wanton misconception filled Grand'mère with dismay. True, the object of it was to the world only a middle-aged, scheming man, with the doubtfulness of a cloud over his interests and engagements; but he was to her a son, her only son, who had been devoted and dutiful—too loyal, indeed, to breathe a whisper of Grand'mère's forward interposition for the purpose of opposing his and my Lady Rolle's sovereign will, which had it been accomplished would have at least placed Yolande under powerful protection.

Grand'mère contemplated her Hubert setting out single-handed, in the darkness of the unprovoked deadly destruction of the family peace, to search for a lost daughter, his only child. She had a lamentable vision of Yolande, her shy, modest, sensitive child, brought in a moment to a crisis of fear, grief, and shame, quaking and quivering, and wild with distraction of unbelief.

"My daughter-in-law," besought Grand'mère, creeping and clinging to Madame, with her voice broken and shivered to a vibrating shrillness, "chide me, accuse me, that my God may spare me, and be spared to me. I had sooner know myself a miserable culprit, and consent to lay down my grey hairs in a coffin of infamy, than think that He had forsaken the child who trusted in Him. My God! keep her from thinking so. For the dark places of the earth are full of horrible cruelty, and Thou knowest and sufferest it. Innocent women have been foully maltreated and barbarously done to death ere now in Thy sight and hearing, and Thou hast not interfered and opened the earth to swallow up their persecutors and murderers. What can we do? Hearrest thou, Philippine! Blame me, condemn me! lest I or the child curse God and die!"

But Madame remained true to her faith, her instinct and education; her trust in God and her homage to the old mother forming an oasis of docility and gentleness in the arrogance and violent antagonism of her nature. In its inspiration Madame could even argue and plead with the guileless guile of love: "No, no, little mother, thou wert always our good angel, hers and ours. Not true, *ma mère*; if the wolves had not found one way of eating us up, they

would have found another. Courage, Grand'mère, call back thy forces under the good God. Poor, miserable ones that we are, we hang upon thee. Thy son, thy daughter Yolande—more yours than my husband's and mine—who will cure her hurt and wash away her stain, if she survive and return to us, save the wise, tender old woman? Thou knowest that I am but a rod in pickle at the best." Sustained and raised on the strong tower of devotion and duty, Madame in the hour of trial thus re-assured and comforted Grand'mère: "'The wrath of man shall praise him'—shall a Huguenot doubt it? In the *aigues-mortes* our women suffered the utmost, but it was only their bodies, which the Apostle called vile in the beginning. After it would have been all over with the women of the world, who have no souls to speak of, the souls of our saints soared away out of great tribulation, with wings as of eagles, like snow-birds washed white in the stream of His blood, to hover round the great white throne. The soul of Yolandette! how can the caitiff so much as smirch it with a finger-spot, Grand'mère?"

Monsieur had driven away from the ale-house in one of the high yellow gigs of the time, so crazy an equipage that there was more danger of its being tilted up, dashing Monsieur out, and leaving his busy brains on the highway, than of his overtaking the chariot.

After the night of misfortune had drawn a veil of autumn darkness over the confusion and dismay which prevailed, and another day had risen, Grand'mère received several acknowledgments of the evil which had befallen her. The first was a card from Lady Rolle, who had not more than reached the first country-house on the line of her magnificently slow and troublesome progress. It contained only the lines—

" You would not accept my proposal, Madam, and you see what has come of your insolent integrity. I wash my hands of the business. My son has merely done what might have been looked for from him to you, and I suppose now you expect me to interfere and remedy the mischief; but you will find yourself mightily mistaken. As you and the humbled minx have made your bed, so you can lie on't. I have told you I wash my hands of the business. I have to add

that I never repent of my decisions. Your obedient servant,

AUDREY ROLLE."

Finely strung and keenly susceptible as Grand'mère's temperament was, she had no pained resentment to spare for this vindictive taunt.

"God have pity on you, miladi, who thus trample upon me, who am cast down," she said, dismissing the subject; "for the great Lord God repents Him sometimes of the misery which sinners bring upon themselves."

Then Mr. Lushington was shown into the Shottery Cottage parlor, his very brow under his curls suffused with warm red, and at the same time beaded with cold perspiration. His round eyes, bedded in fat, were struggling in their tight sockets for the first time in the course of their existence; his firm calves were shaking like jelly: he stood there an honest man in the grievous awkwardness and genuine distress of having been betrayed and shamed by those whom he had delighted to honor, and whose representative he had been proud to be.

"Madam," he said, retreating instead of advancing when he saw that Grand'mère did not look angrily at him, but looked only a pitiable-stricken woman, "I'd as lief touch a live coal as take your hand. Couldn't, raley, Madam; it ud burn me to the bone. Law! to think our family should have been so left to themselves as to put a finger on Ma'mselle that my lady our own mother noticed and had up at the castle. But Ma'mselle were too good for our rackets, and we're more left to ourselves than ever. It is my solemn conviction, old Madame Dupuy, that we are going right out of hand to perdition. Sharp's the word, and here's the sign. The last time I was here, you mind, I was apologizing profoundly for evening the lass to the likes of my company, and her too good for this world and fit for the company of the angels. Yet the modest saint bethought herself of me, and sent me a kind, sweet wench's message, 'I wish with all my heart I were his little daughter,' And I wish the same, miss, answer I, though I am not worthy. God sen' she may not want a friend. But I afright you, Madam, as I honestly credit, without cause. I crave your pardon; and I came here with another intention."

“ You help me by your kindness of heart, Maître Lushington, for I trust your goodness,” said Grand’mère.

“ I only came here to tell you that our Mr. George, let him be a selfish sneering rake, though I should not say it, and have never said it before, is not a devil outright to abuse his ill-gotten power to the worst. There is proof of it in his carrying away young Madam from the rectory along with your lass to keep her company and blindfold the public. Rolle, who provokes t’other as a mastiff worries a bull terrier, has been twitting him with Ma’mselle’s fine scorn and independence, and what not, when he tried on his game in forgathering with her and Parson Philip’s gay madam, and he has snatched her beyond reach to play it out at closer quarters. But he is not a brute or a devil, is Mr. George ; he and his order are light of mind at this time of day ; the whole set be never clean in earnest unless on the rights of the quality and the English.”

“ It is always the English for the English, my good friend,” put in Grand’mère, to fill up a pause occasioned by the superabundance of her visitor’s fat.

“ Yes, by the Billy, if you will believe it, Mr. George himself fires finely on that. A proud fool have I been to hear him and Rolle speak up in Parliament, at ’lections, and when they were trouncing the French—no offense—doing honor to the old stock. I’m fain to own it were all the honor they did it, for I care nought, not I, for their squalling furrin singers, no better than they should be, their bits of brass and rags of tapestry, and their cracked brown picters in ship-loads, with ne’er a red and white cheek, a blue sky, or a cornicoper of gold in the lot. I leave that to a polished, knavish blackguard like my lord’s Tony, or an impudent scoundrel like Mr. George’s Harry, who pretends to be as thick in the plot for rickety furniture and rusty iron as his master. The dickens ! when I think of the power of grand sticks of trees and heavy stacks of corn they’ve cost my lady, and how they and the desperate evil of play are at the bottom of the orders to sell out every back-going tenant and press every yeoman who will pay with his last groat afore he will quit the fields where his childer have been born and their feyther afore them, I could find it in my heart to smash and burn the toys.”

“ Oh,” said Grand’mère, more to herself than to her com-

panion, " how these quality sacrifice their peace of mind for draughts of pleasure that burn but never satisfy."

"Howsomever," Master Lushington went on, "you have heard what Mr. George is—a *petty mater* in your native tongue, as I've heard often enough gabbled to little profit, and no reflection on you, old Madam. This adventure is but a piece of wicked play to him, and there being a couple of ladies, you may depend upon it he's gone no farrer than to a friend's empty house, or to a quiet country inn, within a circuit of ten miles. Well, but Ma'mselle has sense and spirit, as well as beauty and honesty, and will resist our gentleman's becks and bows, and gifts of smuggled silks and jewelery, by way of atonement and peace-offering. So, cheer up, for while she is amusing him with the stubbornness of her virtuous resentment, she will get a letter sent by a safe hand, or succeed in screeching out of a winder, or waving a kerchief to a friend. What will remain then but the fright and the fine word of being run away with?"

"Ah, but the fright is the smallest part of the evil, Maître Lushington," broke in Grand'mère.

"Nay, but my tongue butters no parsnips," added he, bluntly ; "I own candidly it is none of a fine, but a very ugly word ; let that satisfy you that I speak the truth. Yet I can tell you this—that plain folk know the quality and our family, and will not come down thumping hard on a brush as might not be escaped. One thing I'm woundy glad of—that I could not make up my mind to give our family the go-by, and leave it to shift for itself, after a life's service, till the last moment. For so it have left me the coat which will get me a hearing and an entrance at a hunder turns, to which Monseer dare not set his nose, or come back bloodied in that ere feater. Wear the Rolle livery, in order to ferret out a Rolle and his misdeed ? Not a doubt of it, Madame Dupuy. I wish to goodness I had allers done it as much credit. Moreover, by your leave, I may come down lighter than another, for all our sakes, on the sinner—say than Monseer might be frantic enough to do, when he came to small-swords or pocket-pistols with Mr. George—he's a clever man at that practice—if Monseer's life were worth a farden's purchase, whether he won or lost the dool. But there is no chance of such a meeting, old Madam—not the least in the world ; and as for danger to an old soldier of a

butler like me, hoity-toity! there is a lining to this coat”—and Mr. Lushington fingered some papers in his pocket impressively—“which it dunnot become me to mention, but in consideration of them dirty papers, my lady herself, in her worst tantrums, will not have me arrested, or caned, or set in the stocks, neither for contempt of authority, default of service, or misuse of livery. Pay no heed, madam.”

The effect of worthy Mr. Lushington’s weighty practical arguments, delivered with much elaboration and expense of wind, was a happy one on Grand’mère. The strait was a sore one, but even one such stanch friend was not to be despised.

Mr. Hoadley’s ardent friendship actuated him in an opposite fashion. He renounced Lord Rolle’s chaplaincy, or was dismissed from it, he could not be quite sure which, the moment that the news of the escapade found Lord Rolle, perforce, escorting his mother, with a shocking bad grace, to town, having commanded the attendance of both chaplain and physician to share the burden of my lady’s tempers and whims.

Mr. Hoadley had walked unsummoned and unannounced into the library of the great house at which my lady had stopped, where in studious affectation of study, and in night-gown and slippers, Lord Rolle was to be seen immersed and engrossed in the contents of an ebony cabinet full of inventories, household books, and recipes which he was privileged to examine.

“My lord, I have come to tell you, as a man and a Christian—” burst out Mr. Hoadley.

“My good fellow,” interrupted Lord Rolle, quickly, while he carefully marked his place with his tooth-pick, “as a man and a Christian, I have seen for some time that we don’t suit. There is a check for your salary. Say no more about it. Don’t bore me, and oh! pray, don’t bore Fidèle. You know, Fidèle can not forgive a brutal entrance. See how she snuffs and snarls,” pointing to his weasel-faced satellite in her basket. “I doubt if she would ever have taken you into favor again, and I can’t abide any of my people failing to be on good terms with my dog of dogs. But before you go, you who have not sat so late, reverend sir, or tried your poor eyes so prodigiously with polite society—though you used to be fond enough of a spare seat at the faro-table,

till the rhino failed, or you thought to try the pious dodge—hey! Parson Hoadley!—lend me your aid to make out this word ‘consumed—consummate coxcomb.’”

“‘Consommé of cockscombs,’ my lord; I was not aware that your eyes were so affected. I take leave to inform you that I shall go before the next justice and depose to what I know of this infamous act of treachery and violence, and compel him—yes, my lord, compel him to take steps to bring the atrocious perpetrator—were he the Duke of York or of Gloucester—under the law’s dreadest penalty for a detestable crime.”

“Softly, my man,” said Rolle, quite sweetly, drawing his fingers through his scratch wig, then letting them drop in a pose among the lace of his cravat. “Don’t you think a magistrate who would send one of the royal dukes to swing at Tyburn would be a rarer monster even than Sir William Gascoigne? ‘Consommé,’ was it? ‘consommé of cockscombs’—a charming dish, I am sure. What a ridiculous mistake I had gone near to perpetrate; ha! ha! ha! it tickles me to think of it—appropriate too. ‘Consumed coxcomb,’ ha! ha! yaw! yaw! Good-day to you, Parson Hoadley; I have the honor to wish you a very good-day, sir.”

Parson Hoadley did not credit that his blood was boiling when he told Grand’mère, in the poor fellow’s magniloquence, that he had not called down the vengeance of Heaven on his patrons, but that in obedience to His orders he had prayed for his mortal enemies. Also he declared that he would go to the world’s end armed with the Word of God alone, to reclaim and restore the victim, however infatuated and perverted, whom he would not trust himself to name.

Yet virtually he named her, and the question remains whether it was characteristic of Mr. Hoadley’s temperament or of the views which he had imbibed and held manfully ever afterward, that while he had loved Yolande Dupuy with as true a fervor of man’s love as ever at once troubled and dignified a face now keen, now listless, he could yet term her a victim, while his honor Mr. Lushington would not name her, and could infer infatuation and perversion on her part, and reclaiming and recovery on his own.

Grand'mère loved this young man, and understood him better than he understood himself. She was sunk under her torture, but she could not stand this tone, bred of conceit, irritability, weakness, and faithlessness to human nature. She could have stamped with her high-heeled shoe, and cried, "Go, then, give her up. Be the first to doubt and turn upon her, under pretense of righteousness and charity. It was always the way with the poet, with the priest, and the Levite."

And now there were only the Gages of the Mall to encounter. The Gages were at too great a distance to be roused and appalled by the earliest report of the Dupuys' calamity; but the old squire would doubtless take the trouble to ride over to the Shottery Cottage, and condole from the bottom of his heart with the distracted family.

Grand'mère could not refrain from reflecting a little bitterly on the Gages, and weaving unpalatable, unwholesome fancies concerning them. The father and the son might have saved the Dupuys a world of terror, sorrow, and humiliation by meeting, as frankly as it had been made, what was in Grand'mère's eyes her perfectly modest, discreet, suitable plan of disposing of Yolande. Had the bowls been permitted to roll fairly, long ere this a gracious affection, a pure and honorable love, would have sprung up and flourished under the most serene and sacred countenance and shield; and united the young pair in indissoluble bonds. Not even a Rolle of the castle would have ventured to disturb the peace, and trespass on the dignity of young Madam Gage of the Mall, nay, of the contracted wife of young Squire Gage—a different person in the neighborhood from Ma'mselle, the French silk-weaver's daughter at the Shottery Cottage.

Again, Squire Gage and his son, good as they were, might in their English surliness hold themselves excused for feeling thankful that they had resisted a temptation, and been saved from a pitfall. How could they be supposed to be nobler than the young pastor in exalting the goods which they had been the first to decry by their rejection? Would they not rather twitch the collars of their coats, rub their hands, and talk of foreign fashions, and their being well quit of them? Few men or women in the world were more free from spite and rancor than Grand'mère, but in the mystery,

mortification, and misery of Yolande's forced elopement, she did bear a grudge against the Gages, against Fletcher of Madeley's friend, the devout, charitable old squire of the Mall.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE DEMOLITION OF A CHAISE AND A PLOT.

"LA ! Ma'mselle, don't you see Mr. George is only playing a prank ?" protested Milly Rolle, as she crossed her arms, leaned back in the chariot, and took the matter very coolly.

"It is no pleasantry to me," plead Yolande. " Arrest the horses, Monsieur ; let us go. It is necessary that I return to Grand'mère within the hour ; she will not sit down to the little supper without me. I do not comprehend how you can take us away in this manner, *malgré nous*. But I ask you, as a great favor, that you put me down this moment, and I shall walk home without difficulty."

"I am vastly sorry to refuse you a favor," professed Mr. George, with a great show of courtesy ; "'pon my honor I am ; but you see I have been at the trouble to contrive and carry out this adventure in order to get better acquainted with so charming a mademoiselle as you are, and with my kinswoman Miss Milly. I should lose my end entirely if I gave in to your polite request. So come now, little Dupuy, ask any other favor, and, by George, you shall have it even to my whole stock of *tabac d'étrennes* and orange-flower bouquet, were it only to prove how gallant I can be when I have the opportunity. At the same time consider how I have flattered you two young ladies, for I tell you a false step in this affair may land me in Newgate ; therefore I pray you propose to your humble servant something more reasonable."

"Oh, fie ! you naughty man, to speak of yourself and Newgate in the same breath," said Milly, fanning away the idea with her pocket-handkerchief, for she had made immense progress in the art of fashionable conversation and its attendant airs.

"I am as serious as a parson, Madam," answered Mr. George, carelessly ; "can't you see I'm dressed for a fight?"

Mr. George was aware that there was some risk in his be-

ing caught sight of, besides that of his amusement being suspected and interfered with, at a little distance from home ; and that he might have a chance of being confounded with some of the wild officers of the period he wore a suit in which he only appeared on special occasions in the country—a militia uniform of red, with buff vest and gold buttons. These so dazzled the eyes of silly, susceptible Milly Rolle, that she fancied she could go to the world's end and share danger and adversity with so splendid a gentleman, who was at the same time so elegant and pleasant. He was like her poor dear brother Philip in his regimentals, only Philip was solid and tiresomely in earnest for so young a man, and, though fond of his sisters, was given to contradicting them flatly. And Mr. George was a mighty different man from poor papa in his rusty gown and cassock and old-fashioned bands. Still her papa would miss her when he came back from the assize, were it only in the way of catching up her words and—not snarling at them, her papa was too clever and good to snarl—taking her off and looking down on her intellectually, as Milly had quite wit enough to see that he did. Indeed she did not love the disparaging treatment even when the rector played most condescendingly with his lasses, and dealt out the lordliest indulgence to them.

“If your Newgate is for the men who lie in wait for the poor, and spread the net for the simple ones—” Yolande began, swelling with the generous scorn which combated craven fear ; but Milly interrupted her by bouncing up and putting her plump hand on her mouth.

“How can you go into such a huff and be so saucy to Mr. George, Ma'mselle? Do make allowance for her, sir ; it must be her French breeding which renders her so shy and savage, as she laughs and declares she is, when the black dog is not on her back,” explained Milly in something like artlessness. “Now, little Dupuy, come down from your high horse, and don't look at me as if you would take a bite of me : it ain't no use. Why, I've known all along,” she continued, triumphantly, “Mr. George had it in his head to give us a bit of pleasure, in the only way he could with all our folks so straight-laced and tyrannical over us. I can tell you I've had my work to decoy you abroad to such a safe distance as to enable this gentleman to put his purpose into execution. Many a time I've had to say ‘Plague take that granny of

yours, who was always in the way.’’ In this fashion giddy, deluded, incorrigible Milly gloried in what should have been her shame.

Yolande lost every particle of her fitful bloom, and paled to a stonier grey than ever, with her mobile mouth set hard, though perhaps she cried as she had not yet cried in the fast falling shadows. Some natures break down more surely at the falsehood and ingratitude of a friend than at any personal danger and suffering.

Yolande would not continue a struggle which was useless from the moment she was lifted into the carriage. Happily for the Honorable George and his gentility, it was not necessary to put the mufflers which had been provided for her hands and mouth into requisition. She sat in the gathering darkness, giving no farther token, though her consciousness of her position was morbidly keen. The approaching night, the increasing distance from Sedge Pond, the treachery and absence of trustworthiness in Milly Rolle, the insolent audacity and defiance of her will by Mr. George, came over her strongly. She dared not trust herself to think, lest she should break down, for no Huguenot girl could bear the thought of being overcome by tribulation. She could not allow herself to conjure up the amazement and consternation which her absence would excite in the isolated *émigré* household at the Shottery Cottage, or what she believed would be Grand'mère's piteous patience, and the sore check the old woman would put upon herself, that she in her age might sustain and minister to the middle-aged man and woman, who remained her children still as much as young Yolande. She knitted her soft brows, pressed her tender lips together, and clenched her weak hands, to keep herself from wasting her small strength in a fruitless outcry against the violence which had been done to her. After all, it was something to be a Huguenot even in a strait quite removed from the old Huguenot trials. Just as Madame was reminding Grand'mère, in the desolated domesticity of the Shottery Cottage, that it was not for nothing the Huguenot women had endured unspeakable indignities and burning wrongs in the *aïgues-mortes* and the convents, Yolande was reasoning with herself whether she was so degenerate a daughter of her people that she could not take up her share of the universal trouble, however panic-stricken and mortifying her peculiar

experience. Was the God of the noble old Huguenot women too lofty and far-off to deign to heed a poor girl's distress, in the imminent risk of her good name?

In the mean time Mr. George was beguiling the time by taking snuff out of the Duchesse-de-Longueville box which poor, unsuspicuous Grand'mère had admired. As he did so he chattered to Milly Rolle, and introduced into the chatter all sorts of languid, frivolous baits and lures to reconcile Yolande to her fate. He promised the girls the sight of a provincial Ranelagh, under the vague protection of other ladies of his acquaintance—a hint sufficient to make Milly jump with joy and cry breathlessly, "Oh, sir, will there be Chinese lanterns, such as one hears of in town? Will there be boats to sail and sing in without the fear of being drowned? Alleys to run away and dance in with any fine partner who offers? And real boxes where one may sit with one's party, drink real tea, munch real cakes, and quiz all the other boxfuls? Oh, you ninny, Ma'mselle, why ain' you delighted?"

But Yolande was only the more affronted and indignant. "To think that I would be pleased with such things—the colored glass, the cakes, the *monde* as wicked as this cruel man, with his smooth, smiling face, which is hard like a rock, while my father and my mother are in despair, and Grand'mère crying out sorrowfully for me! My heart, what do they take me for? Dream they that I shall be kept still as a *sabot* by the talk of floods, bull-dogs at farms, or herds of cattle going to market? I am a *poltronne*, but not *comme ça*. On the contrary, I shall watch like a mouse till I can gnaw and creep through all these obstacles, and not for a quarter of an hour, but a quarter of a year, though I wade, swim even, and hazard being worried and gored by horned cattle the whole way home. But, behold, it is all over with him and his family, all over! But when was it ever begun, save in the *mode Française*, which he found detestable, thou silly, slighted, dragged-through-the-mire Yolande? Still I was worthy of him in a sense before, now I am unworthy of him or any man. The dear Grand'mère may essay to console as she will, she can not undo this day's work; and she has told me already that the French girls are never seen or heard of out of their families and those of their *intimes* till they are married and under the protection of their husbands, because a word, a breath of scandal, a letter or a rendezvous,

sullies a young girl beyond an honest man's count. *Tout beau!* what would they think of a *fuite* like this?"

Mr. George's chariot, with its four long-tailed castle-breds, was struggling along a frightful by-road, where no four horses except those to the manner born could have kept to their traces. They made so little progress, however, that their master took the precaution of sending on all his spare fellows before to bespeak refreshments and accommodation for the party at the first inn they should come to. "I can not trust these rascals," represented Mr. George, "and to sup on a raw rasher and sleep in a damp bed would be the death of me for certain; and though you, little Dupuy, with your flinty heart, would not mind that, I have an objection to having it recorded, 'Here lies George Rolle, dead of vile cookery and a shocking catarrh caught in the service of women who were ungrateful to the unlucky dog.'"

"Dear! dear! Mr. George!" deprecated Milly, in a genuine flutter; "what tempts you to speak so of Newgate, and tombstones, and such-like dismals, in connection with yourself? It is as bad an omen as having one's chamber-candle guttering into death-spools. I declare if you do not make an end of it you will give me the shivers."

"No need on the present occasion," said Mr. George, treating her concern for him cavalierly, as he crossed his booted leg and pointed his toe, "since Harry the rogue can dress a kidney, and make a bed when he chooses, with any Moll cook or Nancy still-maid of the lot."

Milly ventured to pursue the agreeable associations thus suggested, by inquiring, with interest, if Master Harry could do any thing to friars'-chicken or cherry-pie, which she must own were her tid-bits. Mr. George vouched with unblushing confidence for Harry's compounding both on the spur of the moment, and Milly rewarded her grand, all-powerful cousin for his ready attention to her wishes, by bridling still more, and disclosing that the night air was giving her such a prodigious appetite that she seemed to palate the dainties already.

"And what will *you* have, my dear Mademoiselle? Now don't look so contemptuous, since you have not supped. I beg and implore that you will not turn your shoulder to me and stare out of the opposite window there. It is not becoming, it is not genteel, it is not pretty, little Dupuy." So Mr.

George persecuted the object of his vagrant affections, and pressed his flagrant suit. "I have an immense deal more experience than you, as to how young women should behave. I have made it my study ; and granted that a coquette who piques a gentleman into opening his eyes is something, yet the style will only work if the creature is of the first water ; and a man soon gets sick of contradiction and defiance when a reasonable amount of complacency would attach him for life—for a year and a day at least. Think of it in time. Take an example by Cousin Milly, and deign to indicate to your slave what you might prefer by way of gross material food and drink during the indefinite period between the hour of noonday, when you last took dinner, and that in which it will be possible for him to live without the adorable company of his two witches."

"That must be main soon," put in Milly, smartly, notwithstanding the dubious condemnation of coquetry, "else my papa and mamma will never forgive me this frolic, though it is so mortal dull at the rectory when your family, sir, is not at the castle. I believe the old people think that Doll and me should be content to play all our lives with daisies, kittens, and Black Jasper, as we did when we were children."

"I have not the roc's egg," admitted Mr. George, candidly, maintaining his cross fire ; "but if little Dupuy will only oblige me by stating her wishes, however nice they are, however hard she is to please, if they are attainable by man doubly, madly enamored, I engage they shall be fulfilled."

"Ma'mselle, do you hear Cousin Rolle?" remonstrated the provoked Milly. "Do what Cousin Rolle bids you, or I'll not be fit to hold my hands from boxing your ears."

The aggrieved, insulted Yolande, thus turned upon by one who had been her friend, had nothing to say to her, but to him—"Monsieur I want only bread and water to keep me from dying of hunger and thirst. And I do not want it too much, for if I die, I die—that is not much to a Huguenot ; we are used to it, the dying under persecution—indeed, we have called it, glorifying God when He asked it of us in the times past ; and I suppose He asks it besides of all his poor ones with bent heads and broken hearts. If you do not kill me, I return to Grand'mère over deep seas or roads strewn with flints."

"Farce, my child," Mr. George negatived, from such a tremendous height of conceit and patronage, that to have brought him to a sense of his base, unmanly trifling would have been as much as to perform a miracle. "Such doings, monstrous uncomfortable ones, went out with King Arthur, if they ever were in. Did you ever hear of demoiselle or grisette turning up nowadays, on the back of an abduction, in the guise of a beggar-maid? I should think not. If you ever show your divine face again in such a wretched hole as Sedge Pond, which was altogether unfit for you, I lay a bet of my last hundred, and Mistress Milly here will be umpire, that it will be seen riding in a coach no worse than this one, though it is just possible my venerable old friend may forget how well De Sevigné was broken in to behave on such occasions, and refuse, like a mean, old, cross-patch, to receive you."

"Is it that God receives as well as avenge?" said Yolande, sticking to her point, with her great steadfast grey eyes, so different from Milly's twinkling hazel ones. "I do not ask Him to avenge me. I leave his vengeance to himself, according to his word. But as God is perfect, Grand'mère will try to be perfect. I laugh at disgracing Grand'mère. Can you stain the lily, Monsieur, or soil the moon, though the hands with which you do your *devoir* are as ink, and the clouds as pitch? For me, you can not carry me out of God's sight and reach; with all your boldness, you do not mean that. If I am to glorify Him by suffering, as my people have done, He will permit me to die, or teach me to live. Ah! with Him darkness is light and death is life, and so I rest your *serviteur*, Monsieur."

"Mr. George," remonstrated Milly, vehemently, "I wonder you have so much to say with Ma'mselle; I wonder you go on discording with her. I am advised she is an out-and-out Methody of the French stamp. Did you ever hear such a naughty girl, to say all these good Bible words, as if this was Sunday, and she were composing one of my papa's imposing homilies? To apply them to herself too, in such a trumpery affair as being run away with by an overgallant gentleman, which I'll go bound she would have given her ears to have been long since. She daunts me. I have to poke my fingers into my ears, for I can't abide to hear a slut of a woman preaching, like Satan

reproving sin, no more than my mother could listen to a sermon, once delivered, pity on us! by Madam Gage of the Mall. Have done with your rhapsodizing and your quoting of the Bible, Ma'mselle; you forget that I'm a clergyman's daughter. Be more modest, for, in spite of all our regard and confabs, I must tell you plainly that I'm black ashamed of you."

But Milly got something else to daunt her very soon. The October night had drawn its white moist veil, scented with the subtle, melancholy perfume of decaying vegetation, over the earth, close enough to mask faces of misery, and every act and actor which called on the light of day to expose them. What of the wind and water-mills which had at first shown distinct in the dense red gold of sunset was blotted out along with the millers' houses, for which Yolande searched vigilantly, as well as for the square-necked, sloping-shouldered red churches and hamlets which burst out impetuously here and there like the attempts at riot and rebellion with which the political world was primed. But these were always at too great a distance for a scream to reach. Miller, or bell-ringer, or busy motherly woman, carrying water from the draw-well for her goodman's supper, or, taking advantage of the last light of day, sitting on the door-step working with the bobbins or the straw which won bread for her bairns, were alike beyond Yolande's reach. It was very likely neither gaffer nor gammer would have been so disinterested, or so much at leisure, as to have paid respect of the kind desired, to a faint, stifled scream issuing from a muddy chariot. One or other would rather have gaped, told himself, or herself in abject admiration, "that be a charyot and fower," and then taken refuge in the cautious, self-satisfied reflection, "folks mun mind their own business, and let their neebors fight theirs out for theirsens. But mappen the gentry be none the better agreed, or the freer from trouble, than the bondagers. In troth, that squeel sounded as if yon were some poor body going a road with main ill-will."

As it was, Mr. George had no call to use the muffler, and it served him for a trifle to toy with, as a mad doctor trifles with a strait waistcoat so long as the patient, at whom he is glancing out of the corner of his eye, is not refractory and furious. And the notable thing, in either case, would

be that Yolande, or the patient, would remain perfectly quiet and demure as cats, while it would be Mr. George, or the mad doctor, who would be guilty of unrebuked and unsuspected folly, of all sorts of antics with the muffler and the waistcoat—hanging it over their heads or round their shoulders, or dressing their fingers in it like a company of puppets.

The carriage lights, with which Mr. George ought to have been provided, had been neglected. The hunter's moon threw only such a struggling, fitful light between banks of clouds as caused single farm-houses and detached cottages, seen by its dim, chill beams, to look awfully lonely and miserably poverty-stricken. The deep ruts in the heavy loam of the by-road, now no longer visible to the coachman, made the horses flounder in their toil, and the chariot to rock ominously, like a ship on a stormy sea, every moment driven more and more among the breakers.

It was in vain that Mr. George stuck his head out of the window and delivered angry commands and counter-commands, accompanied by mouthfuls of blasphemous oaths, and a feint of drawing his walking-sword and "pinking," or murdering the driver, as the only natural and justifiable mode of dealing with a difficulty and the servant who could not cope with it.

The levity of Mistress Milly's chatter was jolted out of her. She became white about the rosy gills, and began to add to the din by screaming as piercingly as she had screamed when the hostile mob threatened my lady's carriage in the market-place of Reedham, and by flinging herself frantically from side to side, and clinging desperately now to Yolande's shoulder, now to Mr. George's.

"Monsieur," said Yolande, her voice clear and audible in its liquid foreign articulation, and sounding like the sudden peal of a little bell, "is there the semblance of an overthrow?"

"You have hit the mark exactly, Mademoiselle. And how does such a heroine as you are like danger when it is near?" said Mr. George, who had all the coolness to make the investigation with a sneer.

"I don't like it," answered Yolande, quite truthfully; "nevertheless, I believe Grand'mère prays for us, and I am sure her prayers will be heard before your curses. But,

Monsieur, the poor trembling, tired beasts are overdriven, and thus they stumble at every step."

"Hang me, but raving devotee of a Mademoiselle though you be, you are right," acknowledged Mr. George, not a coward on his own account, and not so great a fool as to refuse to admit and correct a mistake when it was pointed out to him—a mistake, too, which his knowledge of horse-flesh, about equal to that of *vertu*, would have prevented had it not been for what he inherited of his mother's insanely impatient and imperious temper, which had been excited by opposition, and ruffled beforehand by the encounter he had undergone with what struck him as the superhuman courage and constancy of the French girl.

But before Mr. George's fume could abate sufficiently to allow him to arrest the reckless spurring and whipping of the horses, with a last lurch, a wilder scream from Milly, a more frightful imprecation from Mr. George, and a half breathed murmur from Yolande, the chariot toppled over with a stunning impetus and a shiver of glass. There was a snort of horses' breath, a rattle of horses' feet, and the chariot lay right across the road, hanging into the ditch which bordered it. Happily for the occupants of the carriage the tormented, terrified horses broke the traces with one bound, struggled to their feet, those of them that could still muster strength for flight, and scampered off, clattering and plunging along the rough road, while those that were dead-beat stood and shook at a few yards distance.

Mr. George was no coward, as has been said, neither was an overturn so rare and improbable an incident in his annals that he had no precedent in his experience, no resources for the occasion. But though he was not left insensible by the accident, he was so far bruised and disabled, and so hemmed in by the cracked and split framework of the chariot, that he was unable to extricate himself, far less to aid others. The situation once proved, he accepted it with *sang-froid*, made an effort to reach his snuff-box, and not being able to attain that *ultimatum*, leaned his elbows in their splendid militia uniform on the panel which imprisoned him, and contemplated the wreck around with as much ease as he could command.

Mistress Milly Rolle was not killed, or nearly killed, though she was crying with all her might that she was. It was

self-evident that no one could be half killed and make the row Mistress Milly was making, not only in wagging her tongue, but in beating with her feet on the boards, and pushing with her hands in all directions, though she made no attempt to rise.

Mr. George was not so sure of Mademoiselle. As far as he could distinguish, while he peered through the darkness, she was stretched without motion for a minute or two, and his callous heart gave a throb of remorse ; then she stirred, slowly at first, more rapidly afterward, until soon she got up as if nothing had happened, and ran to Milly.

“Art thou much hurt, Milly ? Where is the pain ? Raise thyself up, lean on me. Softly, softly, my friend, else the nerves will become masters, and they are horrible tyrants, the nerves.”

All the honest indignation against the unutterable reproach of Milly was gone from Yolande’s voice, and instead there was the pity of a strong angel for a weak girl.

But Milly Rolle declined Yolande’s overtures rudely, and with a querulous and disconsolate wail.

“Go away, Ma’mselle ; you are at the bottom of this mischief. Mr. George would not have moved in it, had it not been to get the better of your prudery and nonsense, and my death will be at your door. Oh ! indeed, do you think I would let a chit like you put a finger on me—and every bone of me broken already—to finish my business entirely. Alake ! my papa, why are you not here, to call people to account for the scrape they have got me into ? My mamma, why do you not come to take care of your poor girl ?”

“Mistress Milly,” Mr. George startled the girls by saying, as quietly as if they were all seated at the castle supper-table. When they looked round, and tried to discover him, a struggling moonbeam gave them a glimpse of his smooth sallow face, rendered grotesquely horrible by a huge splash of mud on it, and by his scratch wig having been displaced in the shock, so that his head looked like a lunatic’s in his primitive bareness, as it nodded to them with imperturbable good-breeding over the broken panel—“Mistress Milly, I beg you to have some mercy on your own lungs, cousin, if not on our ears, and those of the owls and the bats ; the tympanums of the latter may recover, but I implore you to consider that it is the former which will be the greatest suf-

ferers in this *contretemps*, if you persist in exerting them to so tremendous an extent. My good creature, be reasonable; we are all in the same mess; and though little Dupuy seems provided with wings for this and every other catastrophe, I, for my part, have come off but poorly. Allow me to mention that I have had the small misfortune to lose an eye. I am convinced that one of my eyes has been knocked out in rough contact with this detestable pale," asserted the Honorable George, affording a wonderful example of philosophy in his own person, as he put up his hand with simple ruefulness, and touched a cold wet mass in the socket of his eye.

Yolande ran to him at that word. "Can I do any thing for you, Monsieur? Can I bind up the wound? We have had the art of stanching wounds since Bernarde Romilly stanched the wounds of the great Condé. Allow me to extricate you from the barricade."

Monsieur stared fixedly at that proposal. The girl, who had held him at arm's length, and contrived to discomfit him when he had her at his mercy, now, when there had been what the Methodists would have called a signal interposition of Providence in her behalf, neither triumphed in his downfall, nor left him to his fate, nor seized the opportunity to run away to the Grand'mère she thought so much of. She bent over him with a charity which knew no bounds, suggesting the new idea to a man of his calibre that one of the creatures of women, whom he made at the best his poor playthings and at the worst his abominable tools, might have a devotedness which soared above his stoicism in the season of calamity, and was able to afford him support and succor instead of requiring it from him. "I thank you humbly, Madam; I am afraid it is beyond your power to liberate me," said Mr. George, with more sincere respect than he had yet addressed Yolande, or possibly any woman, in the whole course of his existence, not excepting my lady his mother.

"Some hob-nailed lout of a plough-boy, or carter, I make no question, will come up soon; or my fellows, tired of waiting for us, will have the grace to return and scour the road for our bones any time between this and Christmas." However, he submitted with something like meekness to Yolande's attempt to examine his eye, to see whether his hasty conclusion was correct. And he did not fly out in a

rage and decline to entertain her correction of his statement in the announcement that the eye was there, apple and all, and that he must have mistaken for a much more serious and irretrievable misfortune the sudden darkening and smarting produced by the bath of mud in his face. When it was carefully and tenderly wiped away—and Mademoiselle was wiping it with her own *foulard*—the blessing of full vision would be restored unimpaired.

“I crave your pardon, Mademoiselle,” Mr. George exclaimed quickly, and still more gravely and earnestly, “for having spread so exaggerated a report of my own misadventure, and making myself out in as bad a pickle as Miss Milly will have herself to be in. I trust you don’t credit me an out-and-out dastard for my silly error. Stay,” continued Mr. George, recovering himself from his momentary vexation, “I think it must be my rascal of a coachman, who took the liberty of putting us down in this unceremonious style, who is beginning to groan so dismally on t’other side of me that, zounds! I suspect it must have been he who has been killed all along, and not my Consin Milly and me.”

It was terribly like it. The coachman who had brought Mr. George’s expedition to grief in the first stage, had come to great grief himself, and was the person who was making the least sign. Yolande found him sobbing his breath away from a mortal stroke in the chest. And when she had propped him up and procured water in his cocked hat from the ditch to bathe his drooping head and moisten his dry lips, he spoke to her with that awful, unerring instinct of quietness which waits on the height of bodily and mental anguish:

“I be done for in the last of our bad jobs. My breastbone be stove in. The beastses as I drove so long, and as I cut, faix! overdeep the night, have turned on me and done it. Yes, there’s the wife as ought to be thought on, spoke about, purwid for, ‘cause there’s no good flopping and thinking of kingdom-come at this time of the night. Pearson’s kingdom-come’s none for the likes of me, and there’s ne’er a Methody to be found by the side of a road, to flop with one, even if their kingdom would have a gift at the last gasp of a battered rip of a castle coachman—not my lady’s head coachman, only a under, and ’pointed to serve Lord Rolle and Mr. George’s pleasure.”

Yolande hurried back to where Mr. George was, by com-

parison, lightly crippled. "Milord," she told him, tripping in her eager speech, "your domestic is, without doubt, a dying man. I have seen death, though I am only a girl, and I know the meagre face. Milord, Monsieur, though you can not rise, and I can not pull you out, if you turn your head and lean on your elbow, you will see the domestic, and can say what you may to enlighten and sustain him. He has a poor wife, and she is at the heart of him, he looks for the first time to the other world, to which he is going with long strides. Have I need to say there is not a moment to be lost?"

Mr. George shrugged his shoulders and waved his hand decidedly, declining the commission. "Assure the poor wretch that I commiserate him, if that will do him any good; and tell him that I shall count myself bound to look after his wife, although probably he knows as well as I do where I am to get a penny to put into her purse, and how much good being looked after by a man like me will do her. Let that be. For the rest I keep no account with the Church, it is out of my line. I am fain to add, Mademoiselle, that though I do not fear death in this sorry carcase of mine, I have no taste for looking it in the face when other people, with whom I am by no means connected, are concerned. I never can make out what sends some of us poking at corpses lying in state, or prowling round coffins moldering in vaults. Bah! the spectacle is not only an impolite reminder, but a disagreeable reality, and breeds disagreeable dreams. My gospel is to turn my back, when consistent with honor, on whatever is disagreeable, doleful, and nasty. 'Pon my word, I reckon it a bounden duty. Go and preach to the miserable sinner so long as his breath and yours last, my Mademoiselle, but be pleased to hold me excused from the service."

Yolande was foiled, and in her perplexity cast a thought on Milly, since Milly's very ungovernable paroxysm of lamentation and scolding had become hushed before that one strange word of death. Milly had gathered herself up and was crouching, sick and shuddering, in the shelter of the bank. "Milly, I had forgotten, you are the daughter of a good pastor and the sister of Captain Philip, who drew his last sigh on a battle-field. Will you say a prayer of your Church, which he knows and can follow, to the dying man,

while I take his head on my lap, that he may die more easily. There is no black thrush in his mouth and throat, there can be no infection here save that of mortality."

"How could you be so hardened as to propose such a shocking thing, Ma'mselle?" cried Milly Rolle, rousing herself to a vehement refusal, "when Mr. George himself can not look on the sorry sight of his servant dying a violent death? Me, who have never set eyes on a dead man! And it is so bad to begin now in a dark night, by a roadside, that if I do not wink with all my might, and duck my head to keep out all sight and sound, I shall go stark, staring mad before morning; I know I shall. I am not in orders that I should dare to read church prayers; none but a Methody would make so bold. As to your twitting me with poor Brother Philip's death in a wood or a marsh instead of in his bed, I can only say it is monstrous unkind of you, and I can not tell what you mean by it."

"I mean no harm," Yolande maintained sadly, "and the sight is not so bad as you and Monsieur think—oh! not near so bad, since our Lord died where every body could see. Ah! if Grand'mère were here! But what would I? God is always here, and what do I and the dying want more?"

When Yolande had the castle coachman's head in her lap, far gone as he was he recognized her, and remonstrated hoarsely, "You are good to me, miss, you whom I went for to trap! Who knows but it was the wust of my wust deeds?"

"Don't speak of it," negatived Yolande, with Grand'mère and Monsieur Landre's way of forgiving their enemies—so fine a way that it sounded as if the forgiveness were full, and as if it changed the name and the character which ordinary men and women give it, as they either brandish or dole it out, and made it large-hearted forbearance, tender brotherly kindness, sweet true love.

"Thère was a sinner who was in condemnation, as we all are, my coachman, who cried out that he had received the just reward of his deeds, and yet he asked a King who was waiting by him to remember him graciously when He came to His kingdom." Yolande told the story of the Dying thief to ears which grew greedy as they grew dull; and the

hearer was still capable of receiving the news and applying it to a parallel case, for he objected doubtfully.

"But so be, miss, there is an odds in this here pass, for it be I alone who am fair punished. Harry and Will, little Hal, and Martin Reeves, most of all Master George, as ~~is~~ is not guiltless, nay, but whose bidding we did, and for whose pleasure we did it—they all go scot-free—scot-free, and I be done for at one dang," he repeated, wistfully.

"That is true," assented Yolande simply; "but must you be punished, and punished alone, when God is just, and his Son, our brother, says, 'Repent, my coachman, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand?' What if you be taken away to keep you from heavier sin, and your fellows and your master spared to give them greater time for repentance? How know you their needs or their degree of guilt, or that you may not be the chosen, the favored, to be summoned first by a summons which, if He will, can not be too short?"

"Anan! You're beyond me, clear or muddled. But you are good, and mappen they're gooder aloft yonder. There may be mercy in the dang, I dunnot know, I howpe so, and I know I never so much as howped the like before; for, Lord, I repent—I repent, help my repentance, and sain my soul."

The victim of Mr. George's orders and his own obedience to them, spoke no more.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE RIDER, AND THE RIDE HOME AS IT SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN.

YOLANDE reverently covered the dead man's face with her handkerchief. In life the poor rough-living coachman would not have excited the slightest interest in Milly and Mr. George; but Yolande was struck with the fact that now he was armed with qualities which made him an object of considerable speculation to the one, and of lively apprehension to the other. In the mean time the plight of the party was getting more grievous. The moon was setting, and there would yet be a long interval before the October dawn.

Mr. George, closely wedged in, was stiffening in his bruises. Milly's shivers were running through her convulsively, and with aguish chattering of the teeth. But there was no word yet of Mr. George's Harry heading an exploring expedition from the "Barley Mow" or the "Waggon Rest," or of any laborers trudging homeward and lending them a lift, or conveying speedy intelligence of their distress to a quarter whence help could come, before they were all dead from exposure and want. Yolande would have wandered alone in search of aid, and Mr. George could have trusted her, but Milly threatened to go into fits if Yolande left her for a moment "with *that*—you know what I mean, though you have no sensibility, Ma'mselle, not a particle—lying so near me. Oh! I declare *it* is moving, Ma'mselle!"

"Would that it were," answered Yolande, sadly, "though it may be a selfish wish, for this place is another than paradise. Yet what can be said to the wife who may be listening for his step and voice ere this hour to-morrow? How, Milly! what harm can the clay do when there was not even the black thrush in the poor still throat before the breath quitted it?"

"Oh! don't speak of it, you strange, stony creature, or else you'll frighten me next yourself. But I don't give you leave to stir from the spot—that's poz—unless you take me with you, and as I can't move, or even stand, you must carry me on your back."

Then Yolande, listening intently to a faint noise in the distance, was certain that a flight of birds like lapwings had suddenly risen several fields off, and had uttered one or two cries as an announcement that they had been disturbed by an unexpected intrusion on their privacy and repose. Monsieur Landre had taught her to interpret the sounds she heard thus far, and to know that it was not the neighborhood of Mr. George and his companions which had roused and offended the birds' sense of propriety. Something must be stirring nearer them. Listening intently, Yolande believed that she detected the flap of bridle reins, the ring of stirrups, and the heavy motion of a well-trained horse feeling its way over broken ground.

Disregarding Milly's frantic opposition, Yolande set off at once toward the point whence the sounds came. Mr. George, on seeing her movement, indulged in some char-

acteristic commentary loud enough to be heard by the running Yolande. "'Fore George, you are a complete Amazon, little Dupuy. You were a French Puritan and mystic ten minutes agone, now you are preparing to clear a hedge like the Fair Huntress, instead of *la Belle Jardinière*. How many characters have you, if it is fair to ask? As many as the Montespan, or the Maintenon, Scarron's widow?" But Yolande, heeding not, scrambled up the bank to the left of them, tore her way through a hedge, toiled across the corner of a pasture field, and crying out at the pitch of her voice, "Hold! hold! to the right! help! help!" made an opening through another hedge, and all but fell exhausted, in the utmost disorder, at the feet of a man guiding a horse toward her.

"What has happened, Mademoiselle Dupuy?" demanded young Caleb Gage, catching hold of her, too agitated himself to mind his words. "You need not go any farther. Now what an adventure for a girl who has just come out of a bad sickness! What can have befallen your friends that they suffer you to run like this over the fields, and at night too?"

Without being aware of it, Caleb Gage spoke like a man aggrieved, and it did not require his impatient, indignant manner to cause Yolande's tongue to cleave to the roof of her mouth. The shock of the unknown helper turning out to be the young squire of the Mall, and the concern as to what he would think of her, and how he would look on her trouble, were quite sufficient to reduce Yolande to the lowest ebb of distress and humiliation, without the amazement and vexation in his voice. Again, the consciousness that he or any man could thus move her without holding, or seeking to hold, any claim upon her, filled her with shame and dismay.

"That it should be he! He will think me bold, lost to all modesty and dignity! What will he not think of me? And if he thinks the worst—shall not I, who am a sheep at the best, be punished for caring what he thinks?" All this passed through Yolande's mind in her pain and mortification, before she gasped, "There has been an accident, Monsieur—a carriage overturned *en route*, and a man killed."

The brief communication served for the moment. It was of a grave enough character to warrant the manner of Yo-

lande's appearance. The uncertainty who the man was that had been killed, combined with a horror that the victim might be Monsieur Dupuy himself, made Caleb feel an additional delicacy in questioning Yolande. So he turned with her, and rather than cross-examine her, he preferred to explain how he had been riding home to the Mall a good three quarters of an hour ago, by a road a good three quarters of a mile distant, when he had been startled in the quietness of the scene and the season by what he was certain were cries of distress uttered in a female voice. In his turn he had attempted to trace the sound, and it was with great difficulty he had found a footing for his horse and reached the spot where she had accosted him; for the cries had ceased for some time to guide his ear.

Lapsing into silence, in which throbbing hearts could be the better felt, Caleb Gage and Yolande traversed the short distance back to where Monsieur and Milly lay. But Yolande found the whole aspect of things changed. The valet Harry and the other servants had at last turned out from the inn, provided with lights and ropes. Under the smoky gleam and the flare of lanterns and torch-wood, half a dozen busy pairs of hands were raising the broken chariot. They were doing all they could to release the Honorable George, and had secured such of the horses as were not miles on their way to the castle stables.

Yolande had another pang of regret. Caleb Gage's presence was no longer wanted, and without her intervention he might have passed them, and she might thus have escaped being seen by him in her miserably equivocal position.

As for Caleb, he stood confounded at the sight of George Rolle, in his cynical, dissolute elegance forming the central figure in the group. He paid no heed to the salutation of Milly Rolle whose spirits were beginning to revive, and who cried out with a giddy giggle and a childish insensibility to the world's opinion of her situation—

“Good-day to you, Mr. Caleb Gage. Are you going to join us in our little junketing, if the old squire and the preachers of your body will allow you? I vow you are the properest, most obedient fellow I know. But only for once, by way of frolic, Master Gage. And little Dupuy with us too, with regard to whom we all know that your father and her granny had intentions. Why, it happens

quite pat that you two should foregather to-night. Who knows what the lucky coincidence may lead to? La! it is too pat when one comes to think who it was that flew off in the thick of our hobble, and lit upon you and your horse at the nick of time. For my part, I consider Ma'mselle is hugely sly."

Caleb Gage, at the risk of being asked why he "cut" a gentleman, and being accused of insulting him, did not so much as acknowledge Mr. George's approved raising of his hat to greet the new-comer. He did not take a step until it was forced upon his notice that, with none but servants who had been employing their spare time in drinking dog's-nose at the inn, and who were farther flustered by the rating which had been administered to them on their first arrival, he was more likely to suffer than to benefit by the clumsy efforts made on his behalf. For the workers were only jamming his limbs still tighter, and aggravating beyond bearing their master's dislocated collar-bone and sprained wrist.

Caleb Gage went forward then and exerted his skill and strength in the business. He said no word, however, until Mr. George, on being extricated, observed, without a shade of change in his *nonchalance*, "I suppose I need not thank you, sir? you will have none of my thanks; but, at least, allow me to explain that your lending me your valuable assistance has saved you, as a clergyman's cloth saves him, from any obligation on my part to resent your appearance and what seems your uncalled-for disapprobation."

"I deny seeking to save myself from any result of this encounter, Mr. Rolle," answered Caleb, "though it may be convenient for you to leap to that conclusion, and equally so in the present case to hold that a clergyman's cloth shelters him from your defense of your deeds. I make bold to remind you that neither that, nor kinsmanship, has been a shelter from the deed itself. I can not tell how your cousin, Mr. Philip Rolle, may act under such monstrous provocation. As for myself, although I little guessed the spectacle I was doing my poor endeavors to figure in, instead of standing aloof, as you clearly expect, and seeing a great wrong consummated, I have to say to those misguided young ladies who are traveling under what you, sir, are well aware is worse than no protection, that if they will suffer me to con-

duct them back to their families, nothing on earth will hinder me from being at their service. And if you, Mr. George Rolle, or your servants, offer resistance to their return, which I beg and implore them, by all they have ever held dear and sacred, to set about, you will find that the small aid I have been able to render you need by no means stand in the way ; and that only what I am sorry to see are your bodily injuries must interpose between us."

Times and manners have changed since Huguenot families sought shelter in England, and the English gave it them, and a royal bounty besides, not without adding their quota of persecution to the gift ; so that a note of explanation may be here called for. Mr. George's speech implied that an act of charity or humanity on Caleb Gage's part had redeemed him from the penalty due to his mere presence there, accidental and passive as it had been till now. Mr. George would neither take the initiative in accusation, and "post" the Methodist squire's son as a liar and scoundrel on the church-yard gate at Sedge Pond, or in the market-place at Reedham ; nor would he go out to waylay and attack him with a horsewhip, because men educated like young Gage had a conscientious objection to the commonest use of pocket-pistols. Caleb understood the speech and the sarcasm perfectly, and it sufficiently galled the strong, independent young man, who was accustomed to consider his strength and comparative impartiality as constituting him a natural safeguard and protection, not to his father and his father's friends only, but to all those whose backs were at the wall. He had taken a frank, honest satisfaction in such a partanship, single-hearted and modest, which was something different, yet in many respects the same as the old fantastic generosity of the knight who believed in and meant to keep his vow of chivalry. To be taunted with his own exemption in the evil and bitter experience to which he had unexpectedly become privy, was more than the young man's spirit could stand. Already he had witnessed his standard of excellence shamefully torn down, his religious loyalty and purity brought into totally unlooked-for contact with what he was not able to regard as other than the grievous wantonness and wickedness of the world. Caleb did not require the Honorable George's swagger to cause his heart to burn within him in sorrow and anger. He had only to look in

despair at the shrinking, averted, delicate face of Yolande, and listen to the folly and coarseness of Milly Rolle's challenge, to drive him almost mad. So he had spoken in a towering passion, and succeeded in bringing some of the bad blood to George Rolle's cheek. The people clearing the road, and collecting the remains of the chariot, brought their occupation to an abrupt stop. Divided between the pugnacity produced by liquor, and the morbid appetite of vice, they stood shouldering each other, and waiting for an intimation from Mr. George to set upon the single man, who, in entire command of his youthful prime, vigor, and agility, was not yet altogether overmatched. Milly Rolle tossed her head, flounced, and called out—

“Did you ever hearken to such a conceited, strait-laced pedagogue of a bumpkin? Punish him, Ma'mselle, by never letting on that you hear the insolent wretch.”

But Yolande spoke with quivering lips and a dry voice.

“I have the honor to accept your escort, Monsieur. It was not with my wish that I came here.” She could say no more. Courageously as Yolande could assert herself to a scoffing, unscrupulous sinner like George Rolle, there was some people to whom, if circumstances were against her, she could not defend herself, and Caleb Gage was one of them.

“Oh! little Dupuy, you heartless Madam, is that your French fashion of fidelity, to leave us in the lurch, and to think of deserting Mr. George when he has fallen into a doleful plight?” said Milly Rolle, not scrupling to reproach Yolande, who remained quite dumb.

Mr. George hesitated. Though he piqued himself on being a philosopher, it was gall and wormwood to him, as it would have been to his mother had she been in his place, to submit to be foiled in the most discreditable of his schemes. On the other hand, he was a man of the world, and in many respects a shrewd one. He knew that he had failed in his little adventure already. He was not in a condition to prosecute it farther, however much amusement it might have afforded him, and however delightfully precarious and uncertain its termination. He should be glad of his fellow Harry's arm, and it would be the worse for the rascal afterward if he could not time his steps to walk evenly so as to enable his master to drag himself to the promised inn, where he

might have his hurts seen to, and procure the refreshment and rest of which he was so much in want. So far as his own comfort was concerned, he would be glad if Mistress Milly Rolle would take it into her feather head to follow Mademoiselle's example, and give him the slip on the first opportunity. He was getting sick of the exploit, and even without this odious *dénouement* it was proving too much for him. It might be very well by way of change to rave and rant a little about

"A pensive nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, steadfast, and demure,"

and to feel a mild curiosity, such as his mother had felt before him, to try whether he could not shake her out of her propriety and rout her heroics. But the experiment had not turned out to his satisfaction. The Huguenot had contrived to wound his vanity, and, particularly after this overturn, to deal hits which touched what softness was in him, and which he did not at all relish. By this plaguy intervention of young Hopeful from the Methodist nest at the Mall, the business would be blown over the neighborhood, and if Mr. George persevered in carrying it out by main force, the scrape might be serious.

Writhing, wincing, and making faces from pain of body as well as the sharp taste of humble pie, Mr. George could not, therefore, be so dignified and lazily *debonnaire* and audacious as he was wont to be. It was with something like an ugly grin and an impotent gnash of his teeth that he said to Caleb, "My dear sir, I am not astonished that the rôle of a gentleman is not altogether known to you. I am deeply grieved that I am not at present in circumstances to teach it you. Perhaps at some future time I may have that happiness. In the mean time I must inform you that I profess to be the ardent admirer and humble servant of the ladies in general, and of those two ladies in particular; therefore you must see that I can not contradict Mademoiselle Dupuy's wishes, openly expressed (let me observe aside, my dear young lady, that there was no occasion for so decided and sweeping a statement), however they may take me by surprise, and inflict on me a cruel disappointment. So far from so ungallant and ungentlemanlike a course, my good young Mr. Jephunneh, if my dear cousin from the

rectory like to leave me to my fate also, and trudge away with you and Mademoiselle on your Rosinante, in the style of the tinker, the tinker's wife, and his apprentice, she may do so, unless you will please to wait till I send for another of my carriages? Pray allow me—I do not think all the set are done for; but she has my free permission and my best wishes, as well as the other goddess."

"Oh dear, no, Mr. George," cried Milly, obstinately. "I would not forsake you for the universe; I have not the heart to do it; I leave that to a fickle friend like Ma'mselle; let her go, faugh! she's no loss."

Mr. George was so thoroughly, basely selfish, that he put no weight on Milly's going or staying, except in reference to his own wayward inclinations; and it was not on his cards to take guilt to himself by advising her to accompany Yolande, and by forcing Milly to leave him in spite of herself. He preferred doing Milly and her father, the rector of Sedge Pond, his cousin and his mother's friend, the deadly injury of taking the girl at her word, and keeping her with him.

Caleb Gage was not sufficiently acquainted with the truth, and was too bent on rescuing Yolande from degradation and ruin, to stand by poor infatuated Milly, as he might otherwise have done. Yolande too was sinking under the burden of shame which she had not deserved. She was overwhelmed with strange reproach, wounded tenderness, and outraged virtue; but yet she held out her hands pitifully to Milly, as though it would be craven in her to quit her companion and give her up to her own willful, crazy choice.

"Am I to go back alone, Milly? All is not lost yet, my friend. The past can still be undone. Have pity on yourself—on your parents."

Milly only answered with senseless recrimination and abuse, and Mr. George begged Mademoiselle not to protract her *adieu*, as he took Harry's arm and called out "*bon voyage*."

Here came out the miserable meanness of the man, which could exist in company with some faint sparks of valor and some dying embers of liberality—making a partial display of the rags and tatters of nobility. Mr. George could suffer the French girl, whom he had insulted and abused as

far as he dared, and who, as far as she could, had repaid him good for evil, to go without a word of explanation, without a sentence in vindication of the innocence which he and Milly Rolle had conspired to cloud and asperse.

But Mr. George did one good thing. His bearing, with its mannerly refinement and unshaken self-conceit, restrained his people from any expression of rude license or outbreak of hostility. So when Caleb Gage had taken Yolande's cold hand and lifted her on his horse, arranging a pillion for her, and mounting before her as men and women were then accustomed to ride to church and market, he successfully extricated himself from the rubbish and the turmoil, passed the still and silent figure with the face still hidden by the handkerchief, and rode away into the night.

Yolande had not the slightest doubt of her deliverer; she did not even distrust his wearied horse—because it was Caleb Gage's. She was going back to Grand'mère swiftly, surely, and far sooner than she had any title to expect; but for all that, Yolande thought she would have died where she sat.

Caleb was her deliverer, but not her champion. He was her friend, because he was “a kindly man among his kind,” like his father before him, but he was without any faith in her perfect righteousness in this matter. Her lover he had never been, her husband he had refused to be; but it was hard that she should suffer this lowest depth of humiliation. Yolande did not suppose she could have suffered it but for what had gone before it—the sight she had seen, the words she had spoken that night. When she thought of these things she felt it would be the same a hundred years hence, whether she was honored or defamed now. What was mortal man's praise and blame to the spirit which the common tragedy of death had placed in so new and solemn a light, that even Mr. George and Milly Rolle had been affected by it? Why should she make so much ado about the chances of this life, which was so brief at the longest, and at all times so pathetically uncertain, that she should be unable to survive this shame? Still, she could not appeal to Caleb Gage, remonstrate with him, tell her story, and plead not guilty. To him her tongue was tied—would be tied, though she were to ride, not for a night, but for a life, behind him.

Caleb was desperately calm and gentle with Yolande, and all the more that his heart was very sore, with a soreness for which he saw no healing. His first thought had been to take her straight to Shottery Cottage and to Grand'mère, some eight miles distant. But his horse failed more and more, as Yolande's voice, answering his inquiries in monosyllables, sounded more sick at heart and weary, and the touch of her hand felt chiller. He feared that she would not be able to keep up, and would faint ere they reached her home. Then he considered the reception she might meet with, and that having so lamentably departed from her duty, her people might be harsh to her. The austere mother, the worldly father, and possibly even the pietist of a youthful-minded, foolish old woman might be bitter in proportion to the love which they had borne to the sole child of the house, who would be its pride no more, and for whom it could do little else than take her in and hide her. He was sorry for these Huguenots, more sorry than he could have fancied he would have been for those an alliance with whom he had rejected, and whose society he had repudiated. Notwithstanding, it was not for him to subject a girl, however justly she had offended, to any but merciful treatment. There might be more hope of mercy—at least the danger of the shock, with the unrestrained lamentations and reproaches to which he must be a listener, would be averted if he left room for preparation.

To save Yolande from breaking down under his charge, and to defend her from the wrath of those who had a right to chide, but who might be tempted to abuse the right, Caleb Gage decided on taking Yolande first to the Mall, which was nearer than Sedge Pond, and which often served as a hospice for travelers. His father's presence would remove all objection to her lodging there for the rest of the night. Some one of his second cousins might be persuaded into showing womanly attention and sympathy to this extraordinary claimant of the Mall's charity, so that she should not feel forlorn and forsaken in her repentance. For that she had repented was proved by her consenting to turn with him at the moment of his proposal. But oh! he thought, these light Gallic natures, so shallow-hearted, and quick to rue because quick to err! He had believed her the pattern of all maidenhood, only too wise and severe in

her devotion to God and her Grand'mère, and to the performance of good works, and the acquisition of knowledge; whereas, woe to him! there was ground for Milly Rolle's loud complaint that Ma'mselle had deserted the man who had beguiled her (and for whom she had previously deserted faith, home, credit) the instant he was in distress and there was word of exposure. In this light, indeed, she seemed to add cunning calculation to hot passion.

Caleb therefore put before Yolande, in measured, studiously softened tones, the desirability of their having recourse to the hospitality of the Mall. She neither offered resistance nor demurred, but submitted at once. Indeed, she was the most docile of charges, like a bird which is quiet and still because its wing is broken, or a little shot has pierced its breast, and blood-red drops are noiselessly eddying out over its speckled feathers. She had not even strength or wit enough left to descry that if her heart was breaking, her plight had the power to break the spirit of the man beside her; although it was her unbearable misery to think that she had no power over him, except to excite his humanity into combat with his hardly checked aversion. Another person might have seen that it was a bitter experience for Caleb Gage thus to bring Yolande Dupuy to the Mall, where he had refused to bring her in tender distinction—refused, and in his soul retracted his refusal, accusing himself of all blindness and prejudice. He had judged Yolande as far above him as the stars to which she had seemed fitly bound; and now that he had her in his keeping, to carry her to his home as a vain moth whose wings had been singed, a poor victim of George Rolle's cruel kindness, it was enough to make him believe that he was not only himself guilty of woeful misconception and mistake, but that life itself was a huge blunder and failure. The pregnant blow of this one great evil was enough to crush the high hope and splendid trust of young manhood, so that they should never altogether recover their terrible fall. To the Samson whose wife betrayed him all women were from that moment so many Delilahs. Caleb Gage's dismal disenchantment might prove the turning-point from which the young squire should start gradually but progressively on a new experience, until what was sweet in him should be leavened with sourness, and what was gentle trampled hard

and callous ; unless indeed he stood true to his religion in its manliness as in its godliness, and his religion stood true to him. The falseness of man or woman to the divine ideal of manhood, and in it of womanhood, is no light wrong against a fellow-creature, nor is it to be lightly treated. It is the most disastrous misfortune, short of individual falseness to early promise and native light, which can happen to him or her who has taken the original for heroine or hero. Indeed, it is too often the precursor to such falseness, thus working twice death.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### PITY WHICH STINGS AND BITES—GRAND'MÈRE GRANTING AN AUDIENCE.

CALEB GAGE, with Yolande, arrived at the red-and-white house of the Mall. He summoned in the two women—his father's trusted housekeeper, Libbie Larkins, and his ancient cousin Hephzibah—to lead Yolande through the dining-hall, which was only a deserted meeting-house and class-room, now that the evening exercise and the supper were long by. Their footsteps echoed along the stone passages as they passed the stripped pictures conspicuous in their elevation in the gallery, out of which looked female faces in every variety of head-gear, as if they had never even heard of such a thing as a distressed damsel like her who was now brought into their honorable company of sister shadows. Yolande was conducted to one of the primitive dormitories, and there waited upon, and fed, and watched over with due consideration and regard.

Caleb could not suspect either of the women of failing in the duties which he required, or in the instincts which were natural to them. Libbie was a stout, matronly, middle-aged widow, with activity and notability marked upon her as the efflorescence of her methodistical Christianity, notwithstanding that the early Methodists were inclined to hold creature-comforts cheap. But certainly nobody undervalued or ran down her own gifts more than Libbie Larkins, so that she remained humble and affable amid her many attainments. She at once recognized Yolande as the granddaughter of the gracious old French madam who had

praised her goose pie and blackberry pudding, and had given her a valued lesson in tossing an omelette: so highly-prized, indeed, that even now she itched to ask whether the young madam carried any recipes in her pockets or at the tip of her tongue. But Libbie feared that she herself was a hardened sinner, so given up to fleshly lusts and gross appetites as not to be worthy of any ecstatic visions when she could think of any thing so common as dishes and diets instead of calls and convictions—subjects which she felt were better suited to this young woman of the world, who had allowed herself to be betrayed into a scandal. The young squire had not said what had brought Yolande to the Mall, but had explained that this was a young mistress with whose family the old squire was on friendly terms, as Libbie very well knew, and that she had taken fright at the first word of warning, and had hastened to accept his invitation to be restored to her friends. Libbie would know how to deal with a young lady who had allowed herself to go so far in undutifulness and imprudence, and yet not hurt or humble her. If it had been fair-time, Libbie would have conjectured that Ma'mselle had been to Reedham fair without leave; as it was, she saw that she must have been mixed up with some other giddy doings.

Mistress Hephzibah Gage was the model of an old maid-en of sixty. She was slim, where Libbie was buxom; and shy, where Libbie, in spite of her Methodism, was free-spoken and demonstrative. She was a creature of the most limited experience and the most one-sided information. Having led an utterly secluded youth, and having dwelt for a long time by herself on a narrow income before coming to the Mall, she had a crystal simplicity and purity about her graces, and a pensive, elevated unworldliness in her character, which impressed all who came in contact with her; and, above all others, Libbie Larkins, who did not know any quality or acquirement which struck her more powerfully than blessed Mistress Hephzibah's combination of innocence, ignorance, and enthusiasm. She had been converted to Methodism on her first visit to her brother and his wife, and had then joined the society, and been identified with it ever since.

Neither Libbie Larkins nor Mistress Hephzibah were of the kind of women to be exacting with other women, though

both, in very different styles, were intolerant to themselves. Thus it befell that though their faith was noble, their instincts, purified by their faith, in general stood them in better stead than their principles. But the circumstances of this case warped their instincts. It was true, they saw and admitted, that the unfortunate young lady was not an undaunted offender. Her foreign speech, little as there was of it, was sweet in its gratitude ; and just because she was a gentlewoman in undreamed-of straits, she was careful not to put any body about or to engross too much attention. Libbie Larkins and Mistress Hephzibah would have been the last women on earth to visit a first transgression with heavy punishment. The one woman was too near spotlessness herself to shrink from contamination with the spots in others ; while the other was too large-hearted, too much given to serving, not to have room and pity for every culprit. But both women were jealous in the interest of a man connected with them. The young squire was their chief favorite. To Libbie it was sufficient that he was her young master ; to Mistress Hephzibah, that he was her young kinsman. Still they had not attained to such Christian stature that they could cast out fear either in their love or in their charity, like the old squire or Grand'mère. They did not like that the young squire should be disturbed, as he manifestly was, by an unfortunate young lady. "What call had she," Libbie would say to herself indignantly—"a young hussy no better than she should be, after all, and a lover of pleasure—to trouble Master Caleb so ?" Mistress Hephzibah, on the other hand, would be fearful of Yolande's moving young Caleb by look, word, or gesture.

So it came about that Mistress Hephzibah, surprised in the middle of the night, and called to appear in nothing less maidenly than a high-cauled cap towering above her fine but meagre features, and a starched neckerchief folded round her wizened throat, and Libbie, in her petticoat and colored handkerchief, knotted round her head, were both somewhat frozen and official in their friendly offices, even when Libbie proposed, "Don'tee think I had better heat some elderberry to warm the poor heart of her, Mistress Hepzie ?" and when Mistress Hephzibah, thinking that a poor young body might be too frightened to lie all alone in a strange room and a strange house, more by token after

she had been doing wrong, went to fetch her "Songs of Zion," that she might lull her to sleep even as a child. The two women were a little like the Pope of Rome washing the twelve beggars' feet, inasmuch as their beneficence had something in it of supererogatory good works, done more for their own sakes than for that of the recipient. They pitied her like Christians, and ministered to her like Christians, but they could not heartily take to her, believe in her, or hope in her. The elderberry wine seemed to scald Yolande's throat, and the hymns, plaintive or ardent, which the cracked voice gave as a cradle song, caused bitterer tears to flow beneath her closed eyelids than the girl had ever shed before.

Caleb, having given over his charge, went to see his father, to tell him what he had done, and to take counsel with him as to the conveyance of Yolande to the Shottery Cottage.

The time had been when the old squire's motto was the brave Methodist injunction, "Study yourself to death, and then pray yourself to life again;" but age, with its diminished powers and advancing infirmities, demanded another regimen—one of temperate study, early hours, and sunset rest. Caleb had, therefore, to go to his father's room and awake him from an old man's fitful dozing slumber, that he might listen to his story. There, as in the great kitchen where the squire's chair stood in the chimney-corner, the only ornaments, with the single exception of a woman's inlaid work-table, were books. There was even a shelf of books within the bed over the pillow, so that the squire slept under the mighty shades of his Homer and Virgil, his Plato and Plutarch, and of a Hero divine in an infinitely higher sense than all who had gone before Him—He who, rising from his pillow, could rule the winds and the waves, and who, rising from his bed of death, could open a new world. There were a few maps, not only of England, but of America, with blue and red lines traced on some of them, marking out the circuits on which many a time the squire had himself ridden, with his wife Lucy on a pillion behind him. And there were black-bordered, black-lettered cards of Methodist conferences, more quaint and suggestive than ornamental in those days, and rather calls to duty than pieces of self-indulgence, with their set times and set

subjects appointed for meditation and prayer; as well as lists, in the squire's own handwriting, of objects for his bounty, and liberal undertakings to be attempted by him.

Among these homely surroundings, old Caleb Gage sat up in his tasseled night-cap, and heard the narrative which his son, sitting on the front of the bed, delivered to him. The good squire was great enough to bear being disturbed, and was almost as well accustomed to receiving dispatches at all hours as a commander-in-chief or a cabinet minister. But though he could collect his wits rapidly, and with the instinct of genius get at the truth of a communication, he could make little of Caleb's incoherent account. His fine eyes, which Yolande had asserted saw into heaven, looked away farther than ever as they clouded over with wonder and perplexity; and all the help the squire gave his son was to go on arguing—

"Is there no mistake, lad? Art sure you mistook not some other poor Ma'mselle for Yolande, the time being night, and you having small acquaintance with the rare child of old Madame Dupuy? Did she give her name, my boy? How did she answer for having to do with what is so far removed from what I took her for—the wretched trick of running off? You never asked! Why not? It would have given her a chance for an explanation. It passes my poor brain, son Caleb. I can compass the rector's daughter's deficiency—though Philip Rolle is an honorable man, and no mere dead dog of a watchman, whatever the body may say to the contrary, and from my soul I pity him on account of this stab from his kinsman; but for that child, Madame Dupuy's daughter, whom I saw in her reverence standing and waiting in the background of her mother's parlor, only coming forward when there was danger to be faced and work to be done, at the dying-beds in the hovels of Sedge Pond, as a right hand of her grandmother, I confess, it beats me quite. If I did not know you better, I should say that you were blind with prejudice and rancor to even think of her as running off with George Rolle. The mystery of iniquity shall work; but if it begins to work in such quarters, among the green boughs planted by the river, it is more than I have witnessed yet of its corruption; and, my son Caleb, it striketh me

the world must be coming to an end, and perhaps the sooner the better."

The old squire's rooted incredulity sustained a sharp assault from his son's repeated excited assertions that it was Ma'mselle from the Shottery Cottage, and no other; that she had been with George Rolle and Milly Rolle in the chariot of the former, with a suspicious muster of Rolle's servants; that the party, after sustaining an overturn, were found, as dark night was coming on, ten miles from Sedge Pond; and that any defense Ma'mselle had vouchsafed to plead was a single sorry sentence, which, he must say, was contradicted by all the presumptive evidence, and by the testimony of her companions—that she was not there by her own wish. "Why, seeing was believing, was it not, sir?" Caleb ended, conclusively.

When at last Squire Gage's obstinate disbelief yielded to the force of facts, he gave one of the deepest groans he had ever uttered.

"Poor soul! I could not have thought it. How she must have been tried; ay, and got the better of at last by some black villainy!"

Young Caleb could stand the scene no longer, and left the room with even scantier ceremony than Grand'mère had taken exception to, in her mission, an age before.

But the squire did not dream of taking offense—would have laughed at the bare idea of disrespect on the part of his trusty, faithful son. To doubt his son's entire regard, pent up in one channel till the attachment had acquired a womanly fondness and playfulness, would have been to receive still more conclusive proof than the withdrawal of Yolande Dupuy from the ranks of the noble and the true, that the solid earth was slipping from beneath his feet.

However, the squire did perceive some singularity in his lad's restiveness in dealing with a scandal which, as events had happened, was no concern of his, unless as a matter of common humanity.

"Like his mother before him," reflected the squire, "the lad had always magnanimity, and to spare. I am afraid I hurt him by my scurvy hint otherwise. If my dame ever spoke a spiteful word of any human being—and being a woman, and a sprightly one by nature, it stands to reason that she sometimes fell into one of the special transgressions

of her sex—yet give her a cause of personal provocation, and you shut her mouth close, where another woman would open hers wide. Caleb is of the same humor. In place of crowing over the indiscretion and the disgrace of the young French girl who went against his grain at the first—because, according to our different customs, it was as if poor old Madame had thrown her at his head when he had no inclination toward her, and when the gadding gossips who knew no better twitted him with the advance, and caused it to rankle deeper than it should have done—now, he is vexed for the end. Being a chip of the old block—on his mother's side—it shames his irked independence and saucy pride. And well it may, when I had fancied the lass was a youthful foreign copy of his own mother—such a virtuous young lady as John Milton painted in black and white, and John Dryden writ of as Mistress Anne Killigrew. I have never been tainted with the Pelagian heresy, or doubted that the old Adam in us was both deceitful and ill to eradicate, yet I profess I can not get to the bottom of Grand'mère Dupuy's virtuous young lady being made out no better than a vain court madam."

Yolande meantime lay wide awake in one of the little guest-chambers like pilgrims' cells. Long after the solemn, sweet quaver and fervent ring of the Methodist hymns had sunk in silence, and Mistress Hephzibah had departed, trusting that the misguided young woman had gone to sleep with something better in her mind than she was accustomed to have there, Yolande lay and thought painful thoughts. She had borne the first brush of misfortune gallantly, and made a good defense while she was still in the thick of the fight. Now that the worst was escaped, and there might at least have been a breathing space for a rally of her forces, she only debated whether she should not ask to be led into the presence of the old squire, and make a declaration of her innocence to him, even though she should fall down on her knees and beseech him to believe her. But he was the father of the man she loved, and exculpating herself to the one was like seeking indirectly to excuse herself to the other. She felt the words would die upon her lips. She would rather go out wronged and maligned in the judgments she most cared for than have recourse to such means to alter them. Before the air of the Mall, which was so refreshing

to others, should stifle her, or its hospitable roof crush her, she would be gone back forever to her poor home and her own Grand'mère. But then how should she face the rector and Madame Rolle, who had been kind to her, now that Milly was miserably gone? Milly being the principal sufferer by her own folly, Yolande had ceased to think of herself and her own wrong, having been trained up by Grand'mère to believe that she was her brother's keeper.

In the morning it was settled that young Caleb Gage should start at once for the Shottery Cottage, to solicit a private interview with the family, and communicate, what they would doubtless be thankful to hear, the comparative honor and safety of the daughter of the house. Yolande herself would set out under the more proper wing of Mistress Hephzibah or Libbie, and arrive in time to confirm Caleb's statement, and throw herself on the mercy of the friends whose friendship she had spurned.

The old squire, urged by his benevolence and his regard for Grand'mère, would have journeyed himself on the errand, painful though it was, but he was not the eye-witness of what his son had need to set forth plainly; and Squire Gage's relations with the head of the Huguenot family in the person of Grand'mère had been so much more intimate, that it seemed there would be greater delicacy in the young man's discharging the unwelcome task. Besides, the squire had been for some time, with a little pain, perhaps, but a great deal more pleasure, withdrawing himself and putting forward his successor in the more active duties belonging to his station, with which this neighborly office might be classed.

Caleb rode along by the pastures and the edge of the Waäste in a wild, windy, rainy morning, only partially recovered from his disorder of the previous evening by the tossings of a sleepless night. As he proceeded, he felt something of a wild man's savage satisfaction in the weather, in the landscape which he loved being blurred and blotted out, because he was deadly sick at heart. Yet it would not have signified to Caleb though all the haunts of bird and beast, and all the tokens of man's dominion over them, had been spread out in their freedom and fineness of detail before him. The broad whole, which was a glorious marvel, and every individual part of it which was a wonder, would not

have arrested and occupied him at the moment, for all his inclination would have been to shake his fist, and hold up his hand to Heaven against the dominant white blot of the Rolles' castle, which lay like a treacherous spider's web in his path.

But what if old Madame Dupuy should not believe him against the Rolles, who had flattered and befooled the Frenchwoman at one time or another, as he had heard? What if she should suspect him of feigning the character of mediator, and of having himself been an actor in the running off he had pretended to have come upon? What if she should fancy that he had become the inventor of a malicious falsehood, in order to turn away suspicion from himself and cloak his own guilt? Such guile was not without its parallel any more than the deed of violence which it would seek to screen. Grand'mère knew the Rolles better than she knew him; and while they had been her professed friends, he had been all but her declared enemy, and from what she had learned of his sullen pride and resentful vindictiveness, she might suppose him capable of a base, cowardly, cruel retaliation on her involuntary offense. These disquieting thoughts occurred to Caleb, and kept time with his gallop.

When Caleb reached Sedge Pond he heard that Monsieur had not yet returned, and, from his having taken exactly the opposite road to that which he ought to have pursued, he argued that Monsieur's return would not be a speedy one. He had set out in full chase, with a flourish of the trumpets of his woe; and although Caleb should have acknowledged that the poor *émigré* tradesman had shown more human nature in the proceeding than in others which had gone before it, yet, in his distempered condition, he only writhed anew at the fresh publicity which had thus been given to Yolande's offense.

Finding himself at the garden-gate, which he had not entered for more than twelve months, Caleb hammered at it till two portresses rushed at once to let him in. Prie, with her head swathed in a huge roll of flannel resembling a shako, appeared in breathless haste; but she was outrun by Deb, who in one night had shot up, like the bean-stalk of the redoubtable Jack, to the stature, both bodily and mental, of a giantess. Her clumsy, massive features were

now positively grand, as they were set in stanch resolution, or worked with slow but sleuth-hound sagacity. Both reached the gate and assailed the unlucky new-comer: "What news, master? Where be the child? What ha' they done with her?"

Caleb Gage was reduced to such a state of suppressed passion that he did what no Gage for a generation before him had done—he shook off his fellow-creatures in distress, and refused to relieve their anxiety. He bade them send the old Madame to him on the instant, and strode on before them, refusing to take any notice of them, though Deb kept up with him, and plied him with questions, trying even to tempt him with counter information. "Pearson he comed home late last night, and when he heered one of his darters were gone, and how and with whom, as old Madame here bade him be informed fust thing, well, he did just nothink at all. But fust he went into a towering temper, he did, and he called up all the servants as weren't gone to bed on account of the family misfortune, from Harper's Sally to Black Jasper, and bade them never mention Mistress Milly's name in the house again, as they valued their places, and to stop all search for her, because her were not worth it, and he forbade it. If she came back of her own accord, loike prodigal son did, then he would remember, to his sorrow and shame (Madam swounded dead off at them words), he were her feyther; but not till then. Howsomever, old Madame said that were not the way of the Good Sheperd—not with the lost sheep, and her charge were with the ewe lamb."

But Caleb Gage thought to himself that the rector of Sedge Pond knew best, and was he called upon to expatiate to the servants on Yolande Dupuy's delinquencies? It was bad enough to have to explain what he had seen and done to those who were entitled to the information at his hands. So, silently and haughtily, he went to await Grand'mère, in the cottage parlor. Once within the Shottery Cottage, there came a revulsion in Caleb's mood. The dark and sombre parlor forced itself on his dazzled eyes, shining with the reflection of love and duty. To another its wants of embellishment, and complete absence of any evidence of recreation or diversion, might have told of a cramped, chilled, stunted life—its deprivations almost a warrant for outrage

against authority. But Caleb Gage's healthy, genial soul did not understand such an argument, with God's sun overhead, and his green earth around, and down in the depths of the human heart such exhaustless treasures of affection ready to spend themselves on every living thing. Though stupid, and smarting under a blow, he could not shut out what he saw and remembered of that room. There were the pillow and bobbin, and the tapestry frame with the tasks half finished, lying as Yolande had left them, reminding him that the Huguenot women worked boxes full of lace and tapestry for Monsieur's trade stores. But Grand'mère was fourscore, and Madame was the house mother, and was too much of a demagogue and declaimer to speak with her fingers. It was by Yolande's unfailing application that the task was accomplished. And Caleb knew that there is no discipline short of suffering equal to the noble, self-denying discipline of honest work—all the nobler when it is work in an intelligent and a skillful craft—a trained yet voluntary contribution to the great prayer-offering of labor. The temptation which would prevail over an undisciplined vagrant-willed, idly-disposed being like one of the rectory girls, must be widely removed from that of a dutiful, meek, closely-employed daughter like Yolande. With the rectory girls, home pursuits and entertainments were all mixed up with beads, spangles, and tinsel, powders and washes, and not with long spells of work. Their heaviest labor had been to hang gaudy, incongruous patches about their stomachers and trains, making them more like peacocks than ever, till they cried out for the spots on their tails to be changed. The most humanizing occupations the rectory girls had were teasing Black Jasper and fondling their lap-dogs. But when Yolande had a brief holiday, as in the days after her illness, it was given to weed and water, prune and guide the flowers in Grand'mère's *jardinière*, to note even the commonest wayside plant, or to make friends with the homeliest animal that breathed. And there still lay her silver weeds, the broken-winged sparrow she had saved from the hawk, and the crippled field-mouse she had come upon in the furrow. To Caleb Gage the works of God were another Word, and these simple tokens so many commandments to reverence and purity, so that to quit their devout study, and indulge in levity and recklessness, seemed

to him well-nigh incredible. “Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?”

Then there thronged back on Caleb’s mind all Yolande’s antecedents, which gave the lie to her frailty. Monsieur, he felt, was only a degenerate scion of his sect, and he had not appreciated Grand’mère; but he had grown to fancy that all the old Huguenot nobleness, sincerity, earnestness and tenderness had revived and culminated in Yolande, of whom a colt like him would have none, when she was put by a miracle within his grasp. Was this the stuff that slight women are made of? Was this the girl who had run off with the Honorable George Rolle and his cousin Milly? More baffled than ever, though less utterly miserable, Caleb waited for Grand’mère.

At last Grand’mère entered in a Lyons silk gown, mob cap and mittens, a silver dove in her breast, and a staff, like a cherry with a cherry-stalk, in her hand. It struck Caleb Gage that the old Frenchwoman, who had been his *bête noire*, had something of the queen about her—something of the Berthas and Mauds, mothers of their people. He could not help feeling abashed before the old Madame, who in the midst of her trouble was neither impulsive nor extravagant in her welcome of him, as he had expected. She was sedate, with a quiet dignity, in the keenness of her intelligence and her mobility of expression, which would not break out freely now, because its owner could rule her own fine spirit.

But Grand’mère was not alone. Her dark satellite of a daughter-in-law followed, and not only Madame, but Prie and Deb with the freedom accorded in old French households trod on each other’s heels in the doorway, in order to hear whatever concerned the family. And Caleb was called upon to deliver himself of his detestable mission in the hearing of the whole household! It was all over with Yolande so far as hiding her fault went, but Grand’mère might not be aware how nearly his tidings affected her child, and it was barbarous to make him spread them. So after his low bow to old Madame’s low courtesy, he said—

“Madame, I sought to speak with you alone.”

Caleb’s head hung down a little as he spoke, and he pluck-

ed at the button of his hat and the flaps of his waistcoat, betraying that he was grievously perturbed.

“Monsieur, there can not be too much linen in a household,” replied Grand’mère, with deliberate and as it sounded, mocking sententiousness. “I kiss the hand to him who will not speak in a high voice before my people.”

“As you will,” yielded Caleb, in indignant despair. “I have come to tell you that Mademoiselle is found.”

“God be praised!” cried Madame, the mother, in her sonorous voice, which had uttered only jeremiads for many a day.

“The Lor’—but He do be good!” burst in Deb, with an estasy of satisfaction at the conviction which redeemed the dishonoring doubt the sentence implied.

“Let’s go to the chile. You imperent, ignorant babby, Deb Potts, get out of my way now,” insisted Priscille, putting her best foot foremost, and plunging with her head after it, in a manner which threatened to land her in the centre of the circle, by way of taking a step to Ma’mselle.

But Grand’mère, with her high spirit, chastened at it had been, let no sign break from her, save the loveliest pink blush, like that of a maiden, in her withered cheek, and the glow, as of golden fire, in her grey eyes. She would not show what had been her faithlessness by praising her God now; she would not compromise her child by confessing to that young man what her terror for Yolande had been; for he had made himself strangest of the strange toward them. Grand’mère knew what the odium of a *mariage manqué* was in France, and how hard it would have been to bear for her Yolande there; but the brutal courtesy with which this young man in England had added insult to injury, along with the errand on which he now came, was more than Grand’mère’s flesh and blood could stand, and she told herself she did well to let him feel his strangeness now.

“*Oui-da*, I looked for the discovery. It must have come sooner or later,” she observed, composedly. “What then, Monsieur Caleb?”

“I have the profound grief—” Caleb hurried on, more inclined than ever to break down in ungovernable passion, un-called-for as the paroxysm would be beside Grand’mère’s stony insensibility.

She swerved from her firmness as he hesitated to pro-

ceed. "You do not say a young saint on earth has escaped from men and devils to be the youngest saint in heaven?" she asked, with a quick fluttering of her heart, but without altogether losing her composure even at that idea.

"I do not know how that may be, Madame," answered Caleb Gage, losing his self-command entirely. "If it had been a young saint of mine, I should have taken care to guard her with soul and body; as for yours, she intercept-  
ed me last night after nightfall, while I was on my way to the Mall. She was running for aid for her associates and friends, Mr. George Rolle from the castle, and one of the young Mistress Rolles from the rectory, with whom she had been driving to destruction, as far as my dull wits could cope with the circumstances, when they were overturned in the Whitecates Road, and the ditch adjoining."

"Serve' em right, if Ma'mselle lighted on her feet!" exclaimed Deb emphatically.

"An' weren't none of her tender bones broken, be'st sure, young squire?" Prie urged, recalling him to the important point sternly.

But Grand'mère only smiled brightly. "The little one ran for aid? Good! I have no reason to doubt what you say, Monsieur; I doubt it not. Pardon me, but the act alproves that was the little one all over."

Caleb stared blankly. Was there ever such reception of such tidings? Were all the wits of the Shottery Cottage household gone wool-gathering, and was all feeling gone after them?

Instead of answering his silent protest, Grand'mère inclined her head as if listening to the distant sound of wheels, though he could not hear them.

"*Ouais*," she cried, "Yolandette is here! But stay, I pray you, until she comes, my Monsieur, and we see how the culprit looks."

The Mall had lent Yolande its farm-wagon, since she did not chance to ride Darby and Joan fashion with Caleb or his father. Libbie Larkins sat beside her, gravely mindful of her comfort, and gravely watchful, lest a naughty young creature who had been within a hair's-breadth of the sad end of naughtiness, should precipitate herself from the foot of the wagon, and run away again at the last moment. But within an incredible time for a wagon to draw up and

its passengers to be lifted down, Yolande came flying along the garden path, leaving Libbie Larkins as bewildered as her young master under the flash of new light, while she panted and toiled behind her.

Into the door, into the parlor, without a word of pardon, a thought of shame, ran Yolande. She hugged Grand'mère, embraced her people all round, and sobbed and laughed at last, though it was no laughing matter. "*Mémère*, I have got back to you. Were you frightened out of your mind? But little Deb saw us taken prisoners. *Ma foi!* we call her little because she is great every way, that Deb. But what a game, Grand'mère! It was worse than the four corners for the children, and we no longer children, and the month October, and not April, to make fish of us! Ah, what a miserable game and fooling for the poor Milly! But I begin at the end. Behold me, Grand'mère, and all you who can not help believing me. I am back; no one suspects me, no one shames me. Ah! my heart, how happy I am!"

"*Chut! peronnele*," remonstrated Madame. "Grace of God, Yolande!" she reminded the girl in solemn exultation, "the good God of the Huguenots faileth never."

"If little Deb had been bigger, as big as some folk a' know," declared Deb, sniffing significantly, "some other folk 'ud ha' smarted for putting so much as a finger on Ma'mselle."

"Nay, now, Ma'mselle," grumbled Prie, "you've been and smirched your wrapper; and who be to clean you, a'd like know, when the great wash be long done? You be a pretty young 'un to get into damage, and have we in a frenzy for you, and let your body-clothes be done to sticks to boot."

Grand'mère almost laughed in Caleb's white, melted, averted face. Then something of her natural graciousness, dashed with a shade of scorn, returned to her face and voice.

"Monsieur, my young Samaritan, you and yours are truly good Samaritans. A thousand thanks and praises for that, and for your succoring the child in her need. But she was not a thief, though she fell among thieves. What! my friend, was it necessary that you should be told that? Where were your eyes, your heart? Bah! Monsieur George, her heartless, heedless assailant, knew better than that."

"It is true, Madame," answered Caleb, with bitter mortification, though there was such a flood of sweet satisfaction

at the bottom of his heart, that it welled up through all his hate and rage against himself. "I will not have one word of thanks or praise. No, there is nothing too bad to say of me for my blindness and grossness."

And Caleb went away, knowing that Yolande was saying, "Don't be hard upon him, Grand'mère; he showed he was my neighbor; though he was so mad, he must needs believe his eyes against me—me, Grand'mère, and the God who made me," and saying it with the sweetness of her restoration to unsullied innocence and crystal truth. To Caleb it was like a restoration to Paradise, for a blessed vision was swimming before his eyes, and a blessed harmony sounding in his ears, comforting him for his harshness.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE SERVICE REQUIRED OF THE OLD SQUIRE.

"My son, I am mightily thankful for this solution," said old Caleb Gage. He and his son sat together in the chimney-corner, the only spot sacred to them in their own roomy mansion, at that hour of the twenty-four—the hour of setting the large establishment in order for the evening exercise, when the big house-place and kitchen were vacant of other company.

The squire was seated in his great chair, the back of which rose in a high oaken peak, like the canopy of a throne. As he sat he gazed, with the thoughtful pleasure of long use and wont, on what were in themselves not disagreeable objects to contemplate, or at least not less attractive than the spindle-legged furniture and fantastic japanned-work ornaments of the best parlors of the day. On a sharp, gusty October night, few sights could be more welcome than the great glowing hearth—the hereditary post of the mastiffs, terriers, and colleys, lying curled or stretched around it in basking luxury. In keeping with the hearth were the settles, only less black and polished than the rafters, together with Libbie Larkins's cluster of flitches and wreaths of pot-herbs. The burnished copper and pewter reflected the warmth and brightness quite as well as silver and china would have done; while the squire's favorite books, with the rich tan and deep

brown of their calf-skin, were not a whit more out of place as silent witnesses to the traffic of a kitchen, than as solitary occupants of a library, with its state prepared for them alone. They lent the power and grace of culture to narrowness and rudeness, the honor of high thinking to the homeliness of plain living.

The young squire looked less in love with his position. There was all the difference between the young squire and the old, that is commonly recognized between the flower of men and of women. The young squire had a man's share of sedateness and clearness, and of that coolness which is not cold, but genial and fruitful as the climate and soil of the temperate regions of the earth; and the old squire had a woman's generous enthusiasm and fine instinct, with her wonderful power of self-abnegation and devotion. And on these qualities in his father, young Caleb Gage was inclined to look with tender and reverent respect.

Yet young Caleb glanced around him with an expression akin to disgust, as he sat in the settle, and fretted in gloom and vexation, while bearing his father company. But for all his sense of incongruity between his wishes and his surroundings, Caleb, in his uprightness and manly broad-shouldered figure, presented a less striking and distinguished personality than the squire, with the stoop of age and its rugged furrows, even his eyes being robbed of their beaming by that other world's approaching so near as to cast its shadow across them.

"I am mightily thankful for the clearing of Ma'mselle," repeated the squire; "it was a dog's trick of George Rolle, and silly people will continue to tattle of what they can't know the rights of, there's the worst of it; but no generous tongue will bring the misadventure up against the young woman. It would have been the queerest, most distressing transformation of a lamb into a goat, or a dove into a crow—and you know the contrary natures of the creatures, son Caleb—had a Huguenot indeed, of old Madame's rearing, been found to aid and abet a fine gentleman. I don't believe in any confusion in human nature, any more than in the animal kingdom, beyond what sin breeds; and here grace abounded to conquer sin. And I protest I was slow to believe in poor modest Ma'mselle's delinquency all of a sudden. Now that I come to think of it, I am astonished that you could, sir.

As her bated, provoked, true-spirited grandmother demanded, where were your eyes, where was your heart, young man?"

" You know, father, I was always a stupid dog, a dolt, an idiot; but for all that, you ought to make the best of me," half groaned, half grumbled Caleb, divided between discontent with himself, and a general quarrel with the world.

" I do make the best of you, my boy," answered old Caleb, demurely, " particularly as you are not quite such an ill-conditioned oaf as it is your pleasure to represent yourself. And after all, Mr. George and that foolish infatuated lass of the rector's may not have undone themselves, either, so clean as we are inclined to conclude," he ended more gravely.

But young Caleb, awkward and uncomfortable as he was, had his own reasons for not letting the conversation drop, or suffering it to diverge to the desperate circumstances of Mr. George and Mistress Milly.

" So you marvel, sir, at my setting down Mademoiselle Dupuy as an accomplice in her elopement, when she made neither complaint nor defense to me worth speaking of, to account for her situation?" returned Caleb, staring at the wall opposite him, as if he were viewing the facts of the case inscribed there altogether in the abstract.

" The depredators were already punished, the havoc they were working was like to stop," argued his father. " You did not ask the girl a single word to warrant her in attempting to exculpate herself. Your behavior, by your own account, was considerably stronger evidence of your ill-will and rancor toward an unfortunate Huguenot family, than I could have believed you capable of," ended the squire a little testily, owing to the pain it gave him to speak severely to his son. But he returned almost immediately to his usual frank, trustful tones: " You see I deal plainly with you, lad, as the kindest mode in the long run."

" I want you to deal plainly with me, whether kind or unkind; you could not be unkind to me—of course that is nonsense, sir. But you really think that I condemned Yolande unheard, and that I bear a rascally ill-will to her and her family?"

" Softly; I did not say rascally," objected the squire, a good deal vexed and puzzled. " By the bye," he went on, in-

terrupting himself, "draw a pitcher of claret for yourself, if you care for it." He fancied that the grimly spoken words, which he could not understand, came out of a dry throat, and he did not seek to confine his son to the iced water he had himself taken to when he and Mr. John Wesley were students together, and thought tea too stimulating. "Let your discourse be seasoned with salt—that is, not the Attic salt of pungent wit and keenness in controversy, but the Christian salt of strict truth, moderation, and as much amiability as an Englishman can muster. Ah, lad! if thou hadst but known my old comrade, William Fletcher of Madeley, with every look and tone as benign as it was firm. But I have put my foot into it, haven't I?" asked the squire, arresting himself with a mixture of consternation and lurking fun—"treated you to a hair of the dog which bit you, by way of a profitable lecture on good manners. Seriously, Caleb, I opine that there is an obliquity in your vision where these French folks are concerned. Such an affection doth trouble many a man who is otherwise liberal and affable in his walk and conversation. It works on you in this way, that it causeth you to rise off your wrong side, and be in your wrong mind and mood whenever this subject is broached, though you are not crabbed or churlish on other subjects," concluded the squire anxiously.

Young Caleb laughed a short laugh. "Why, father, I thought you were a wise man—deemed an oracle, indeed, in the society."

"I don't know that I ever pretended to be a sage"—old Caleb defended himself from the new attack with great composure and coolness—"but neither am I aware that I have said or done any thing so silly on the present occasion that my own flesh and blood should twit me with weakness."

"Oh! but you have committed a signal error this time, if you never made one before in your life," protested young Gage, rising and looking at the dogs, and stirring them with his foot. "Look at Beaver, father, how ragged his ears are, and that young lurcher is getting his wisdom teeth. What do you call yourself when both you and your friends at the Shottery Cottage mistake love for hatred?"

"You don't mean to say that, Caleb?" exclaimed Squire Gage, laying down the pipe he had been smoking and rising to his feet in sheer amazement.

"I do mean to say it," Caleb took the word out of his father's mouth. "And, more, I hold that too many cooks have spoiled this as well as other kail—the worse luck to the supper," he finished ruefully.

"No, but you must have been as perverse and peevish as a woman," remonstrated the squire, "and I reckoned you such a reasonable, sensible lad. If any young man was safe to know his own mind, I thought it was you, who are like a rock for steadiness and solidity. Oh, dear! I have been mistaken in you, Caleb."

"I am sorry for it, sir," Caleb confessed. "I always knew myself to be good for nothing, and something of a hypocrite; not that I lent myself to regular imposition, but I was only quiet because I am such a slow, stolid mule, and you offered me no pretext for breaking out; you were too good to me, and affronted me into my best behavior; and see how ill I have behaved on the first provocation."

"But I don't know that you have behaved so ill," the squire said, quickly relenting; "your conduct in a woman would have been counted only natural indecision and instability—but you of all men!"

"Don't shame women by the comparison," Caleb said impatiently; "don't, for the sake of my mother."

"If your mother had lived," the squire proceeded, softening into still greater tenderness, "she would have made a better handling of this business than I and my fine old Madame have done. Not that Madame Dupuy is a clumsy fool, or that I had no experience of her management, bad as English usage was against it. The old country gentry have entered into family alliances often enough, and the leaders of the society of Methodists have proposed marriages for their members—only we called them marriages in the Lord, and not *mariages de convenance*; and I have lived long enough to know that there is a great deal in a name. You take away my breath, Caleb, but don't let us get into another monstrous misapprehension. You have taken a late fancy to this Mademoiselle, whom I always thought to be charming, bidding fair to be 'good, and fair, and learned,' eh?—as that other she I loved from the first moment I saw her—but who, when she was first proposed to you, you declined."

"Don't be hard upon me, father," pleaded the young man.

"Am I hard? But what if you should change your mind again? What if you don't know it even yet, my lad? What if this be compassion, contrition, a genteel amends to the poor young creature who has been badly dealt with by a rogue of quality, as any man with the name and feeling of a man would grant? I would not be against any fellow's being generous to a girl on a pinch; but this is being overgenerous."

"Of course I can not convince you, if even you choose to doubt it," asserted Caleb, while he walked up and down; "but if you will only think to what I subject myself by this confession, and the way in which my hopes of success have been diminished by my own thickness of head and hotness of temper, you will see that it is not at all probable that I should talk myself into the vainest of passions, or get up an attachment almost certain to cover me with chagrin in the end. Is it not more credible that I should fight against it as long as I was able, and only give way to it when I could no longer keep it down, and when I judged that it was but honest to myself, and no more than her due, to say it was all my fault, and bear the penalty?"

"Yes, there is some reason in what you say," candidly admitted the squire.

"Consider, father, that whatever motive of despair or distrust might close her mouth, it could only be because jealousy and doubt conspired to put me beside myself, that I was driven to do what you called condemning her unheard."

"I stand corrected, Caleb," said the squire gently; "notwithstanding I can not get rid of my own impressions on the matter, and they don't altogether tally with your conclusions, man. But then what do you propose to do?"

Before Caleb could answer, a detachment of the Mall company bustled in with batches of bread and pots of potatoes.

"Never mind, my lad," his father hastened to console him. "The air, even though it be somewhat boisterous, is refreshing, and before turning in for the night, I like to step across the threshold and look at the sky the last thing, were it only on account of the patriarchs standing in their

tent doors and worshiping in the sudden death of an eastern day and the glorious moon of an eastern night. We have plenty of time to settle your affair before the evening exercise, Caleb. I do not think I have forgotten that my blood was young once, and prickled as yours does now."

Caleb was reconciled to the interruption. Like most men, he could speak more freely as he strolled with his father in the court or on the terrace, or as they stood with their backs to the gable of the porch, seeing each other's faces dimly in the wavering starlight. Besides, the necessity of giving his father the support of his arm under the force of the gusty wind drew the two so closely together in their old affectionate relation that Caleb did not hesitate to come out with another grievance which was troubling even his small amount of expectation of a happy issue to the impeded course of his true love.

"We have nothing worth offering her at the best, father. You do not suspect me of reflecting on your plan of life when I say so; what was good enough for my mother should be good enough for your son's wife. Still we can not count on a stranger, a delicate, accomplished young woman, however good, having any stomach for becoming head-schoolmistress, housekeeper of a poor-house, nurse and what not. It would not be fit to ask her to fare as we can fare. Though, to make a clean breast of it, it seems the only honorable step that is left to me. Mayhap I had better drop it rather than mock her with such an offer."

"Mayhap you had better, my son," acquiesced the squire, more merrily than he had yet spoken, clinging to the care-laden Caleb, keeping his feet and piloting himself along the terrace in the wake of his son, "if she do not think your offer a worthy one after her own granddame and guardian made choice of you; if a Huguenot's daughter can not fare as the jewel of the Nenthorns of Stavely was proud and happy to fare, and to fill the offices which she filled well—then, in the name of common sense, call quits with the scheme."

"But, really, do you think it was ever a practical scheme, sir? Do you think it would still be possible to renew the broken-off attempt at an alliance?"

"As for that, I always understood that it was you yourself, my friend, who stood as stiff as a halberdier, and form-

ed the insurmountable obstacle. You must give me a little time to collect my scattered thoughts; for if I made one master-blunder, it is like I fell into a dozen anent the question, which I might pass to you as lights and guides."

"No, no, father," insisted Caleb, "tell me what you thought, and let me judge as to the blunders."

"An humble suitor! I like not to do it, lad, for pampering your besotted vanity," the squire said quickly, having committed himself by a rash hint, and feeling the necessity of fighting off from an explanation.

"The vanity being so mortal already, a truce to it. You must speak out to me, sir, since you are my sole adviser," enjoined the young squire, with eyes the sparkling of which was hidden by night.

"Good lack! it is a fine office," protested the squire, still reluctant to express his convictions. "Much thanks I am like to get when she avenges herself by giving you the sack without remedy. No, no, Caleb, don't believe that; but, in troth, I am affrighted I may mislead you."

"It strikes me, sir, that it is somewhat late in the day for that apprehension. Come," out with your conjecture or cogitation, whatever it was."

"I ought not to betray a tender lass," alleged the squire, becoming himself as confused as a girl.

"What have you to betray? Unless, in good earnest, you have betrayed yourself already. I can give you no peace until you follow up your intimation."

"As if you were giving me peace, you young rebel," groaned the squire; "and my breath a'most gone with these scuds. Come into the porch again, Caleb. Well, it comes to this, that I did think the fine young Frenchwoman—fine by nature, not by art—was inclined in the beginning to look as sweet as her shyness and her self-respect would let her on my bumpkin; "and it went to my heart to see her balked of her innocent maidenly fancy by no fault that I was free to charge upon any body, but by one of those mischances of this world, the foundations of which are out of course. However, as I also imagined that you, sir, looked as surly as the east wind on her pretty homage, I would not have you give a fig for my idle guess."

"At least, you never let me know of the suspicion," suggested Caleb, with confusion burning in his brown cheek,

to which his father's was light ; "not when you sounded me on my views as to marriage, and my feelings for the family at the Shottery Cottage."

"No, Caleb Gage, no more than she spoke up for herself when you wronged her ; and I trust you do me the justice to credit that I would have died sooner than make such a communication to my own son, if he had not spoken to me as he has done to-night," affirmed the old man with dignity.

"Not to make me happy, father?" murmured Caleb, pressing up to him.

"You silly lad, there would have been no question of making you happy then ; but only of causing a young lass, who was too good for you, to hang her head foolishly."

Then old Caleb Gage let out his satisfaction, amounting to exultation, in his son's having come round heartily to entering on the proposal of early wedlock with Grand'mère's child, on which he had looked favorably from the first. With all the squire's charity, he was not able to hold in very high esteem squires' daughters like Milly and Dolly Rolle, and though he doubted not that they might grow into tolerable wives and mothers at the end of a score of years, he had rather that they did not serve their apprenticeship for that period at the Mall. Such young women as they might consent to do it, balancing all young Caleb's bodily and mental endowments, and the future disenfranchisement of the Mall, against their horror of Methodism. But the struggle of warring tastes and tempers which would ensue could not be an agreeable or profitable experience, especially to the old squire, with regard to whom the most he could hope for from one of these daughters-in-law was that she should humor and tolerate the master of the house as half a dotard and half a fanatic. And young Caleb was too loosely attached to the Methodist body not to have offended its leading members, so as to render it improbable that he should marry into the society. His father had therefore been sometimes visited with concern on his son's account, lest he had erred in his philanthropy, and proved improvident and inconsistent to the extent of being less than kind to his own flesh and blood, by rendering it a precarious venture for the young squire to marry, if he resolved to do so, in his own rank of life. But Mademoiselle

and her tidy little dowry solved every difficulty now, when a solitary, eccentric life had begun to loom as an imminent danger for the son of the man who held a noble woman as God's best gift, and which, granted, made every toil and sacrifice possible and easy.

True, it was uncertain whether the influential old mother who represented the Dupuys would consent to take up afresh and renew the contract at the point where the Gages had offensively stopped short. There might be a rigid French code of propriety against such fickleness. The Dupuys might have formed other projects for Yolande, and kept them private because one of their own countrymen figured as principal in them. Or, in spite of the late outrage, the household at the Shottery Cottage might now feel themselves more settled down at Sedge Pond, and in less urgent need of allies. In their ignorance, they might not appreciate the damage done to Yolande by the little frolic of Mr. George Rolle; and Grand'mère, the old squire felt, was the last woman in the world to seek to hush it up and mend it by hurrying Yolande into the formerly talked-of marriage with Caleb Gage. And lastly, even the manly part which Caleb had played in the outrage, carried out as it was under a miserable and mortifying misconception, was not calculated to recommend him to tender-spirited and high-minded women like Grand'mère and Yolande.

But old Caleb Gage was nevertheless sanguine. He was ready to throw himself into the breach and bear the burden of another's conceits and vagaries. To do this for his son, who was ordinarily so wise and reasonable, that his late temper and conduct could only be accounted for by a love-disturbed brain, with its heady fumes, would give him the purest delight. He would have out his nag and saddle-bags the first thing in the morning, and ride across to Sedge Pond, and be himself the bearer of the regret and repentance, the confession of hastiness and willfulness. He would at the same time solicit and plead for the restoration of the terms which had already been laid down and shabbily treated.

In the mean time, standing in the porch in the fitful starlight, he forgot the cold and the gloom, and expounded to itching, half-amused ears what he called the "illustrious gain" which the presence of a gentle, refined, intelligent,

godly woman was to a family, and the pinching loss it had been to him and Caleb to be confined for so many years, even to the best of the Libbie Larkins and the Mistress Hephzibahs among womankind. Not that the good creatures were not true women in their best features, but they wanted the tact, the discrimination, the rich sympathy and wide charity of his dame, and were no more to be compared to her "than clambering peas to mantling vines." The squire by intuition and deduction ranked Yolande among these fair, wise, virtuous women, and prophesied her eminence and the rare gift that her presence would be to the Mall, until it almost sounded as if he looked for the return of his Lucy, who had gone from him so early. In his excitement he even called Yolande by the name of Lucy, and spoke eagerly of the improvements which would be made and the progress which would be attained when Lucy should be with them.

The great bell clanged for the exercise, and the conversation of the squire and his son was abruptly brought to a termination. The two went in with the rest of the big motley family, and sat among the company of preachers, licensed and unlicensed, the widow and the orphan, the maimed, the halt, and the blind. The squire did not conduct the services, but only took his turn with the others as Brother Gage. But this chanced to be his night to preside. He read as his passage of Scripture the last chapter of Job, and to the marvel and mystification of many of his hearers, he returned thanks in his prayer for a treasure which had been taken away from the Mall, and of the return of which there was good hope.

The last words the squire said to Caleb before retiring were still full of the past and the future:

"Lad, I have bethought me of something that was your mother's to give to Yolande. I mean her work-table. She kept that when she disposed of every thing else that belonged to her, even to her harpsichord. I think she might have kept that when I kept my books, for sure noble verse is made to be wedded to sweet music, and methinks stringed instruments were constructed to compass the union, that it might sound its best to praise God withal. But my dame had not a tuneful ear, though she was in all else as many-sidedly tuneful as the wind or the waters. But see now, her

Huguenot daughter might have brought the harmony of Clement Mariot's psalms from the dumb wood and ivory, for these foreigners have a skill of their own in harmony. However, Lucy could put her table to use in the making of coats and garments, like Dorcas—the end to which she was thenceforth to devote her needle. Here is the key, I have kept it at my watch-guard 'till now, when I deliver it up to you until the day when you can make free to hand it to your dame that is to be. Had this been July, and not October, I might, French fashion, have taken a posy in my hand from you to her to-morrow, and sent you no farther than the hedges to gather it, for those women, with a right down love of flowers—and, bless you, I like the sign—don't mind though they be scarcer or no more scented than hawthorn or honeysuckle."

The next morning, when the good squire was called betimes to set out on a bridal errand for his son, he was found lying solemn and serene on his widowed bed, having departed overnight on a sudden journey, with the gift of the faithful remembrance and the tender admiration of his brave manhood and age in his hand, wherewith to greet his wife in the city from which there is no going out.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE SQUIRE'S LAST FEAST.

THE news that he who had been squire of the Mall no longer dispensed its bounty and charity, caused no little excitement in Sedge Pond and the neighborhood. Those who had not cared to acknowledge his acquaintance since he had changed his religion, as well as those who had profited by his Methodism and its institutions, regarded this as an occasion which could not be missed for repairing to the Mall to join the funeral gathering. Crowds congregated in the court and on the terrace, and streamed through all the doors, which on this day had been thrown wide open. They wandered over the house, and wondered at the transformations upon it, and passed below the denuded pictures, where painted eyes, incapable of new light, seemed from their cold exultation to challenge the crowd as they pressed along

below. But the most hostile ancestral figures did not hinder the humblest of the mourners from penetrating into the room where the coffin rested on its trestles, ready for removal, nor from reading the name and the age of the old squire, though both were well enough known to his contemporaries. Afterward they visited the Academicia, now bereft of its patron and restored to its old use. Long boards had been set in the low-roofed, dark-paneled room, to bear refreshments; and the guests walked up to murmur a word of condolence, or silently to take the hand of the new squire, the central figure in the gloom, as he sat there in his mourning-cloak, the representative of the house and the master of the feast.

In those days, when roads were bad and traveling difficult, when old neighbors, and even near relations, sometimes did not meet for years, the protracted ceremony, with its attendant hospitality, was reckoned a simple act of respect to the dead, and of consideration for the living, which no person, whatever his religious or political opinions, was warranted in neglecting. People of both sexes and of all classes and ages attended such gatherings, sometimes from a mixture of motives. To some it was an opportunity for meeting company; others regarded it as a concession to the prior claims of the Great Debtor; and perhaps more viewed it as a good occasion for paying early court to the rising sun—the squire who was to be, whose character as squire was still to be made, and who, if he had offended any of the prejudices of his fellows as squire-apparent, had it yet in his power to make amends by reforming the errors and remedying the abuses which had existed under the old *régime*.

Various other impulses actuated the huge assemblies which gathered at funeral feasts in those days. Not the least of these was a sense of obligation to close, if possible, a generation's feud, and thus set at rest the qualms of conscience awakened by an old opponent's having passed irrevocably beyond the old circle of friend and foe.

And special circumstances combined to render the gathering at old Caleb Gage's burial a curiously large and motley one. The untoward state of the weather, the sudden showers of snow, fast heralding winter, did not diminish it, though it promised to render the pall and the new-made grave whiter than "the white flowers of a blameless life,"

which the dead man had worn. The old squire who, in his life, had been pointed at as a fifth monarchy-man out of season, a seditious revolutionist, a canting, blaspheming Methodist, like many another chief, received an ovation now, when he was no longer here either to profit or to be spoiled by it. Had the Apostle Paul died when he was called mad by the Governor Festus, he might have had a notable funeral, attended not only by the empty chariots of his judges, but by some of the august magnates themselves—King Agrippa and Queen Bernice winding up the procession in the very state with which they came to hear his accusation and defense. Men of every shade felt at last that there had been something in a high sense noteworthy and true in Caleb Gage's life of fervent faith and entire consecration to deeds of benevolence, though, in its course, it had been seen only in glimpses and fragments, and had appeared to them full of paradoxes, failures, and absurdities. Men who had never set a foot within Caleb Gage's house, or looked on his living face, traveled a dozen miles to witness his institutions, now that the testing seal of death was stamped upon them. It was as though a wonder of his age was being removed from their midst. Few near Sedge Pond knew, or could have known, of another and even greater man protesting against the racket, the hard worldliness, and worse than pagan unbelief which then prevailed—the simple sailor, Captain Coram, who at that very time was inaugurating charities more extensive than princes had founded, and dedicating to the best service of God and of humanity the gallant life which had been spared in battle. It was not only the eager, fervent Methodists who believed that there would be a harvest from that funeral feast, and that Caleb Gage, like Samson, would slay the Philistines in his death as in his life, and possibly more in the last than in the first, because it is an eternal law that the seed can not be quickened unless it die. If there is any higher element in humanity, any power of receiving the Divine leaven, it was not unreasonable to hope that some who came to the Mall to scoff might remain to pray.

To not a few tenants of the Mall, Caleb Gage's funeral day was the celebration of a long farewell to the old home. True, the old squire himself could not have been more in-

capable than was young Caleb, of roughly dismissing ancient guests, or having recourse to any but the most gradual method of change, since it affected those for whom his father had so labored and suffered. But it was impossible that the Mall could continue the rallying-ground and training-school of the sect which it had materially helped to form. The yeoman-like preachers, who were even now falling into knots to discuss the late squire's interpretation of the little horn of Daniel, or the seventh vial of the Apocalypse, must come to more practical matters, and choose a new interpreter and leader.

And as much the squire's charge, and as liable to be scattered by his death, were the young apprentice boys and girls who, set idle for the day, were half tempted to think it a holiday, since it was not in reason to expect that their round, ruddy faces could be sobered to meet the requirements of the occasion. But even here and there among them were thoughtful brows and tearful eyes.

The patient incurables—most patient of all the sick in the squire's hospital, and the most permanently established of his family—were limping and shuffling and groping about among the company, so accustomed to human suffering and the reverses of earth, that it did not seem there could be a calamity or bereavement on which they would not turn placid, almost smiling faces. There was another class of invalids—bronzed soldiers and sailors, with their wounds and their scars, half subsisting on their pensions, and half on the feasts of their dogs, and on their stories of land and sea fights, foreign countries, and great hurricanes. There were traveling tailors, saddlers, tinkers, glaziers, and pedlars, who ought to have been men of substance and repute, but who had lost caste, and were discarded by their more prosperous brethren. Following on their heels came the privileged beggars, the more privileged if they happened to be crazy—down to the very gipsy whose camp was pitched on the Waäste, and who, whatever his origin, was still the Canaanite among the lowest of the Israelites. But the most touching and comforting of the pictures in the rag-fair were the poor outcasts whom the squire had been able to draw from the kennel, and had left behind him, cleansed, clothed, and in their right minds. As to the Al-chemy by which he did it, one might be content with refer-

ring to certain chapters in the Bible, in which it is recorded how one sat at His feet washing them with her tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head, until He said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" and how another was brought before Him by her Jewish accusers, to whom He turned and declared, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more."

Thus were met old and young, rich and poor, man and maid, as well as matrons carrying little children, that they might be able to say in after years they had been present at the Mall on the occasion of the great funeral feast of the good squire, whom in his day their mothers had heard called mad. Most of the people wore mourning, either in their whole attire or in rusty scraps and small touches. A favorite costume with the women was black scarfs, and white gowns, emulating the snow on the ground outside, and the shroud within the coffin, as well as being significant of the hardy stoicism and determined endurance of the age.

There were two little family groups which kept somewhat sedulously apart, and yet could not quite withdraw their eyes and their thoughts from each other. At the head of the first was the rector, grown grey suddenly as it seemed, who had been heard saying shortly and sharply that he would not have missed this funeral feast at any price, or for any excuse. With him was Madam, wan and woe-begone in her old comely fairness and stoutness. She had dragged her feet into company and forced back her heavy tears, even on the convenient occurrence of a funeral, because it was her Philip's will to brave out and live down the dreadful misfortune which had befallen them. Dolly came after her father and mother, looking cowed and deserted, and causing the spectators to rub their eyes at sight of the familiar mantua and hat without the other mantua and hat which were wont to accompany them. The whole of the Rolles were distinguished by the absence in their dress of the mourning so generally worn. Black Jasper walked last; he was easily moved to tears, and he improved the opportunity by crying copiously. He only intermitted the operation when a hymn was raised. Then he would wipe his eyes, hold up his head, and sing with great sweetness, and no diminution of zeal and fervor, for

the trifling objection that he was unacquainted with either words or tune. His indignant master would face round upon him and order him to stop—now that blubbering, now that bellowing; and Jasper would duck his woolly head and try hard to obey, but the force of a gushing and musical temperament was too much for him, and before any time had passed Black Jasper was off again either into sobbing or singing.

The other group consisted of Grand'mère, Yolande, Monsieur (who had returned, and shrugged his shoulders at his vain pursuit of his daughter), and Mr. Hoadley, who had escaped for a moment from his hard work in moral sinks and sewers. Mr. Hoadley did work hard and unremittingly now, in a desperate attempt to make up for his former latitudinarianism, though Grand'mère would have it that he must leave the past yesterday, with its neglected duties and its many offenses, as he must leave the future to-morrow, with its anticipated cares and toils, to him who alone is sufficient for these things. Grand'mère's party was wound up by Deb Potts, who, arrayed in a huge black hood of Prie's, looked well about her, and took in every thing around her. The men soon left the women—Monsieur to go on other errands, and Mr. Hoadley to join the rectory family. Mr. Hoadley was some comfort and of some consequence to his brother churchman. He carried another flag of truce into the Methodist muster, and acted as an escort to the depressed and affronted Dolly, damaged by her sister's having gone lamentably astray. It was not that Mr. Hoadley did not rejoice like a man, and thank God like a Christian, for Yolande's deliverance, though she owed it not to him, but to another. But the fact of the young squire of the Mall, and not Parson Hoadley's having compassed Yolande's rescue, was not without its effect in raising another barrier between her and her slighted lover. Mr. Hoadley had not been privileged to do any thing for her sake but to throw up the chaplaincy, which he ought to have resigned long before for his own. A sense of failure and incompetency where she was concerned, began to haunt and chafe him. Where was the use of his continuing to hang on the skirts of Grand'mère and Yolande, when Grand'mère herself overlooked him at the Mall, and Yolande's manner gave the impression that she did not turn

her back upon him because she had no more heart or spirit to turn her back upon her greatest bane? But to Mr. Hoadley's sensitive vanity, her meek endurance was even worse than her sauciness—a thing that his honorable intentions were not fit to stand any more than his abused passion and his bigoted intolerance.

Neither Grand'mère nor Yolande so much as observed Mr. Hoadley's dejection that day; only Yolande had a passing sense that the yoke on her neck was slightly tightened. She was at the Mall again, happily lost in the obscurity of a crowd, but she recalled her past acquaintance with the place with a sick shudder. The very hymns—songs of Zion—which Mistress Hephzibah had sung to put her to sleep on the night of her disgrace, fell on her ear full of painful associations. But those who had so sedulously entertained her before were not able to pay much heed to her now. Libbie Larkins, inconsolable because she could even so much as think of baked meats, was too much engaged. Mistress Hephzibah, in her serener atmosphere, barely noticed the young Frenchwoman, and that more out of charity than any thing else, little guessing how near she had been to having her for an honored young kinswoman.

With reverent tender regard for the trying solitude of Caleb Gage's position, and with a flood of compunction for her bearing toward him on the last occasion they had met, Grand'mère followed the stream and approached the chief mourner. With sore grief for his grief, with yearning pity that was all the more pitiful that she did not think to offer it nor dream that he would care to accept it, Yolande glided like a shadow after Grand'mère.

"We are so sorry, Monsieur, we can not say how sorry," declared Grand'mère, earnestly. "He was a gentleman as there ought to be—gentle. We saw him only so many times, but he was our true friend. If he had tarried here a little longer, Yolande would have sought to kiss his hands for his house's roof; but the roof which became him was the cloudless canopy of the vault of heaven. Monsieur, you are his son—what is our knowledge of him or our loss in him compared with yours? I presume not to lament with you."

Caleb lifted up his grave, mournful eyes, and looked on the pair. If any thought at variance with his situation in-

truded itself upon him he hated himself for it, and thrust it away from him. True, his father had rejoiced in his slow and sure passion ; but in the sudden rending of the first ties of nature, Caleb had suffered the natural revulsion from later ties which had been asserting their sovereignty over him and superseding the first. In the keen awakening to all that he had lost, the jealousy of bereaved affection and its generous remorse for the smallest shortcoming, Caleb, modest and singlehearted in his manliness, took himself to task for his failures in duty and love to such a father. He inwardly accused himself of having been engrossed with his willful inclination and selfish personal interests, and with having overlooked and neglected symptoms of decay in the old squire. He had denied his father his society and sympathy on many a day during this summer and autumn, though at the very last there had been an explanation, and full confidence had been restored between them. Caleb belonged to his dead father in the early pangs of separation, and his dull eyes could not sparkle even for Yolande. His tongue stumbled stiffly as he said that every friend of his father's was welcome at the Mall, and more welcome now than ever. He was sure Madame Dupuy was the squire's friend (no, he could not call him the late squire) ; it was kind of her to do him a grace ; and he begged her to excuse his poor courtesy. The very touch of his hand was cold, and he said to himself it was well that he was dead to other emotions, which read like vanities now that he was fatherless, even while he had a conviction that he was cutting himself off from complete reconciliation with the Dupuys, and with his own hands destroying the remnant of an intercourse which, without the squire's ready, gracious intervention, it would be doubly hard to renew. On the other hand, if Yolande had entertained the faintest suspicion of what had been purposed, if the true love between the young man and the girl had been a happy, admitted love, with its course running smoothly, she would have asked nothing from him, but would have respected the oblivion in which he cast himself and his happiness together with her and hers—would have counted herself delicately complimented by the association—would have patiently waited and waited until she could softly recall him to his own and her claims.

As it was, Grand'mère observed, sorrowfully, “ *Le pauvre*

*fils !* We can do nothing for him. He needs us no more than if we were *croquemorts*." And Yolande's heart died within her, and only revived that she might tell herself that she was a selfish, vain, light-minded, worldly creature. And when she had succeeded in stretching, laying out, and burying her love for the time, she could turn and listen to Charles Wesley's soaring hymn, and be inspired and borne away on its strains.

"When from flesh the spirit free,  
Hastens homeward to return,  
Mortals cry, 'A man is dead !'  
Angels sing, 'A child is born !'"

The Dupuys rode home to Sedge Pond, market-fashion, on a wall-eyed, spavined horse, hired from the ale-house, with Deb, shouldering Madame Rougeole, walking alongside, in case the beast should take to prancing and bolting under its burden. Yolande said to Grand'mère as they went—

"Grand'mère, it is white there above, and white there below, and it is we who are like black flies crawling between. Does nothing whiten us ? It has been a journey of misfortune this to the Mall, *ma mère* ; we ought never to have made it. *Petite mère*, do you think that mistakes committed on earth are cleared up in heaven ? His father, saint and sage as he was, died believing me to be black, and *he* believes it, for he believes his father."

"*Ma toute bonne*," replied Grand'mère, "leave not only vengeance, but justice, to the Lord. Oh ! ça, the brightest thing about heaven is that we will see clearly there. Seest thou not thy father and mother here ? They have lived together more than all thy life, and they understand one another not a bit more than they did the first day they came together. They are like planets with different orbits, the planes of which never cross. You and I, we think we understand each other, *cocotte* ; and yet, if one of us were to die to-morrow, the other would be in anguish like the *gars* yonder, to find how many nooks in her own heart she had kept shut up, and how many places in her friend's she had never so much as sought to enter. Every one liveth to himself, and every one dieth to himself in that sense ; and *ma foi !* we shiver, we grow bad, we grow mad in the solitude, long before we pass the great portal, if the Father be

not with us. But there—above, Yolandette, we know and are known ; and as the disciples of the Master would know Him no more after the flesh once they had known Him in the spirit, so shall we only begin to know our people *au fond*, and laugh at the ignorance which we called knowledge in this dim cramped *ménage* of earth, when we are free, and are no longer self-blinded, in the house of the Father."

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### A LIVING SORROW.

At Sedge Pond rectory this autumn life was sombre and shaded, notwithstanding that Mr. Philip Rolle vehemently and imperiously insisted that he and the remaining members of his family had nothing to do with his lost daughter, and should neither be held responsible for her folly nor regarded as sharers in her punishment. Stung to the quick by what he of all men could least bear with any show of equanimity—undutifulness, levity, and vice on the part of one of the daughters he had cherished, and treachery and ingratitude on the part of one of the Rolles, whom, next to his own children, he had loved, and whose sins he had failed to denounce—the rector, with all his efforts at serenity, evenness of temper, and sociability, was sterner and more austere than his household had ever known him.

The loss of Captain Philip had not so affected him. There was a tender pride in that dead sorrow, a loyal submission which brought out all that was most generous in the man and most elevated in his Christianity ; but this wanton dishonor of a living sorrow put an iron mask on his face and a heart of stone in his breast.

Madam, who for a quarter of a century had been the most dutiful and reverent of wives, as well as the fondest of mothers, was all at once drawn different ways by the ruling passions of her being. Sometimes she was tempted to think that the rector was a merciless tyrant, and again that her miserable Milly had never been any thing but a wicked baggage. And she would indulge in such thoughts until she fell into a chronically hysterical state, when she was no longer fit for her housekeeping and cookery, but wan-

dered about pale as a ghost, putting her handkerchief to her eyes, and wringing her hands whenever she got into a snug corner.

As for Dolly, she had never had such a fit of the dumps in all her life. In the first place, she had now some cause to be in the dumps. She deeply felt the loss of her play-fellow. It was lonesome and drear for her to be day and night the only young person at the rectory, unless, indeed, Mr. Hoadley had compassion upon her. She felt it all the more that she was forbidden to complain. Nor was this surprising. She had grown up to womanhood without any training in self-control or discretion. Now she was suddenly gagged and frightened into trembling silence and whimpering obedience by her father's single display of indignation, and his instantaneous renunciation of the offender Milly. And, moreover, there was no hope of an end to Dolly's lowness, for let her be sick, or in as pretty a passion against Black Jasper or the maids as she chose, her mamma hardly noticed her, unless, indeed, to take fits of hugging her and crying over her, which was but poor diversion for Dolly. If she so much as dared to hint at going on a visit to a neighbor, or a ride to Reedham, or across the country after the hounds, her papa, who perhaps had forced her abroad with him only the day before, would stare, contract his brows, and answer her sharply in the negative. He would then walk up and down the room with dreadful heavy steps, and watch her jealously, till she quaked again lest he should denounce her as he had denounced Milly. These were dull days of fog and fall to Dolly ; and though she was not on the brink of spasmodic rebellion like her mother, her dullness was embittered by a sullen sense of injustice. How could she help Milly turning out ill, when Milly had not taken her into her counsel, but had chosen to keep company with Ma'mselle, who had managed to get clean out of the scrape, Dolly being cut off from Ma'mselle's society also for that escape ? Was she to be punished by a life of suspicion, tight discipline, and harsh gloom, for Milly's going off with Mr. George Rolle ?

The very servants at the rectory went about their Martinmas work with the consciousness of an unspoken calamity which had befallen the house, and continued to hang over it. "For, see now," as they said, "cruel, good, clev-

er, and determined as the rector be, can he destroy an evil deed and its evil work by merely bidding every mother's son or daughter hold his or her tongue about it, and forget that it has happened? Can he make Mistress Milly be as if she had ne'er been, by declaring that as he has no son on earth—and he were right down thankful for it this day, for he would not have had his young heir smitten with shame, or burning to avenge a sister's stained name—so he has but one daughter now, for Mistress Milly be his daughter no more?" But could he bring that about? Could Madam's mother's heart, yearning after her child be brought to admit that there could be an extremity which would warrant such cold-blooded wisdom? True, simple folks were bidden keep the broken from the whole—a doctrine the rector was forever touching on in his sermons at this time; and, as the Sedge Pond people said, "It were like Mistress Milly was no longer a fit companion and example for Mistress Dolly, to whom she used to be as much the marrow as two new pins, and the girls as inseparable as any pair of dame's geese, while, lawk! their lives were to run in opposite directions now, the one to light the other to darkness. Leastways, so Pearson would have it. But to say the poor erring sinner were to be stamped into nought, as well as given over to destruction, by her own kith and kin, was less than kindness—indeed were main malicious and vindictive of Pearson in plain bodies' eyes; might be the way of gentle folks, but was one of those forced, unnatural ways which the commonalty could not understand."

No, the rector might pack his skeleton into his closet, and shut and lock the closet door before his household's blinking eyes, but he could not insure that the door would not open of itself some day when he least expected it, or that Mistress Milly would not return like the prodigal son, in which case he had pledged himself to receive her. Nevertheless, judging by his present conduct, it was a sorry reception which he was preparing for her; as unlike as possible to that of the prodigal. At the same time those servants of the rector's who, after the fashion of other servants, sat in judgment on their master, and condemned him without hesitation, were impressed by his calm front, as the firmness and self-mastery of a superior nature and a

superior nurture will always command respect, if not love, and compel the mass, with its ill-regulated and demonstrative passions, to follow and defer to it.

Black Jasper was the most intractable and ungovernable of the rector's troop under the new order of things, notwithstanding that the fellow had all the docility and fidelity of his race. He could not comprehend that his Massa's sister, and his Massa's Massa's daughter was become an outcast and an alien. He would incidentally allude to her with the utmost innocence, while beside the family, half a dozen times a day. He was constantly making preparations which had reference to her return. He would come in with his goggle eyes and his imperturbable composure, and ask Madam whether he had not better air the cane-room for Mistress Dolly lying in it again with her sister ; whether he might go up to Farmer Spud's and seek after a pet lamb "against the young mistress's" appearance, in order to surprise her, or go out and cut rushes to stuff her church hassock with them, for she was wont to complain of it, and it was unused in the mean time.

The rector's eyes would sparkle at these things, and in one sense they quite burned up Black Jasper, causing him to jump from the spot on which he stood every time they flashed upon him. But they were powerless to stop his obliging *mal-a-propos* proposals. So the rector in despair gave up attempting to cut Black Jasper short, or to show him the door in the middle of his speeches.

The rector afforded another contradiction. Behind backs Dolly rated the stolid Black Jasper soundly for his doltishness, and Madam cried out fractiously, "How can you bring forward that wretched young lady in your speeches, boy ? Have you no judgment or no mercy ? You may see, if you like to look, that I can not stand it." But the rector was rather gentler to Black Jasper, and less nettled by his solemnity and cowardice than formerly, and now indulged him more frequently by speaking to him of Captain Philip.

The frost-wind of adversity was blowing into the shrinking breast of this poor family ; while the frost-wind of nature was turning black the garish heads of the great sunflowers in the rectory garden, and causing them to dangle dismally on their nipped stalks. The time for the sunflowers was over, and nothing could save them ; and for

the family there was little shelter in the narrow cloak of pride, resolution, and stoical endurance. There was little shelter anywhere, indeed, save in the wide mantle of strong faith and meek charity, which lies waiting the use of every pilgrim, but not till his wandering foot has carried him within “the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

Madam would have tried to win and wear that mantle, but she was foiled and outraged by her husband’s severity. The rector could do no wrong, and yet he bade the weeping blood of a mother freeze within her breast, or turn to rankest poison. What could she do? How was she to maintain her double bond to the husband whom she had called her lord and master, and to the child she had borne, suckled, and reared? Poor wives and mothers thus rent asunder, and called by warning voices, each as loud as their own natures, to go different ways, what is left them in such tumult but to quit the hopeless, endless strife, to die and go where all feuds are reconciled, where, under the rainbow round the throne of the Great Father, all claims are blended, satisfied, and set at rest?

But Madam did not die yet. She did what she could never have believed she had the bold spirit to do; she intruded on her own husband, in his study, during study hours, causing him to lay down his thesis to listen to her, when she addressed him with a challenge that was almost a defiance.

“Philip, do you mean that I am to give up my child?” (she no longer said “our child.”) “I can not tell whether your meaning is so bad as that, but I am come to say that I can not—I can not. I have let her go for a whole month, unfeeling, reckless mother that I am! Why, the beasts of the field and the birds of the air would have risen up to succor and deliver their young. But I can not be so unnatural any longer; so you may lock me up, or tie me hand and foot, if you want to keep me quiet, for your word has no more power to do it. I warn you of that, Philip.”

He raised himself and looked at her with the wonder, compunction, and consternation with which one regards a perfectly harmless, pacific nature at bay—a sheep daring the dogs for its lamb, a dove ruffling its feathers, screaming and circling between its nestlings and the hawk. “Compose yourself, Milly,” said the rector, trying to re-assure

Madam, and addressing her by her Christian name, which he had not taken within his lips lately, choosing to employ instead the terms "wife," "dame," "mistress," and with a little irony, "lovey," and even that title of "mother," "mamma," which he was lending the force of his absolute, intolerant man's will to make a crown of piercing thorns to her. "If it will be any comfort to you to know," he proceeded, "that I have not let our lost child go without some poor security for her, or been able to let slip entirely what it is no longer any thing but misery to remember—stay, I did not want to wound you afresh—here is a note which I had at the outset from my lady, and she will keep her word; I never knew her fail in that, either for good or evil." He finished with a groan, and taking a crumpled-up note from his pocket-book, spread it out on the table and drew Madam forward to read it over his shoulder.

"Philip," the note ran, "I do not come near you in this horrible misfortune with an utterance of my grief, disgust, and wrath—far less with apologies and excuses, which would only be so many gross insults. But I come to remind you that the villain is my son, though I say it to my undying confusion. You know, thanks to my late lord's remorse, that I can buy and sell this fellow where he stands, strip him of his lollipops of art and fashion, and send him to rot in jail. He shall either stop short in this henious offense against you, and undo it, if it be possible, or he shall repair it with the best he has to give. You may rely on me, Philip, as sure as my name is Audrey Rolle."

"Oh! why did you not show me that before?" remonstrated poor Madam, in excited, quavering accents. "Why was I not told that my lady's powerful interest was engaged for my child?"

"I crave your pardon, Milly," answered the rector, still without anger at his unlimited authority being thus suddenly called in question. "I fancy I thought there were no bounds to your trust in me. I hated to speak of the calamity: it is like touching the withers of a galled, snorting horse—remember that, mamma. And it was no such comfort either. It was not like the Shottery Cottage folk having the glad assurance of their lass back, uninjured, within an hour or two, the moment she could shake herself free—nothing of the sort. Our wrong-headed, abandoned girl would not

accept salvation. What can my lady do, though her will were ten times as all-powerful and unwavering? Patch up a flawed and cracked worldly credit—which I am not convinced I am playing the honestest and manliest part, the part most becoming a Christian and a clergyman, in even passively consenting to."

Madam was easily appeased for any wrong done to her own rights, and almost as easily buoyed up by a slight flutter of hope for Milly. Besides, she had a pledge of her own, lying in her pocket, and about to be brought to light, the receipt of which, the day before, had stirred her up to make her unprecedented attack upon the rector.

"Do you know, papa," asserted Madam, in a little willful delusion, and with a little spite, perhaps pardonable in the circumstances, "I can not think that girl from the Shottery Cottage was so little to blame as they make her out to be? They have so much guile, after all, the best of these foreigners; they can slip out of scrapes, and leave simple, silly lasses, like my poor Milly, whom their French fashions have misled in the first place, to bear all the brunt. I have had a letter, too, from Mr. Lushington, letting me know where the unhappy child has taken refuge. Don't be angry with me, Philip, for withholding it twenty-four hours, since I dared not show it you till now."

His honor gave honor where honor was due, so that his pothooks started with the words "Honored Madam." He then proceeded in no dishonorable or unfriendly spirit to say he was happy to inform her, now she was in trouble about her daughter, that Mistress Milly had sustained no serious wrong, and was in safe keeping. He could speak with authority, for, knowing "our Mr. George's stages," he had himself gone early on a day following a night that she wotted of straight to the Barley Mow, on the White Cotes Road, and there he had found "my gentleman" not able to stir for his bruises and broken bones, from the place where he had been laid down by his body-servant Harry, and "there were ne'er a word of one madam, let alone two," but Mr. George was crying like mad the moment he heard tell of the butler's arrival. Mr. Lushington should but bide a stirrup-cup, and then start post-haste to take Mr. George's reply to three billets which had come to him at the inn. They were all marked "speed," and all "required an an-

swer." The first was from Rolle, to give his brother note that a certain fine lady, a bird of Mr. George's own feather, for whom he would give all the country cousins and foreign traders' daughters that ever stepped, was to be at a certain great house on a certain day; and our "Mr. George," he would neither be to hold nor bind, if he were not up and about again in time to join her, especially if she got word of what had kept him. Mr. Lushington was to vow for Mr. George that, sure as the clock, he was to be there.

The second letter was delivered by a groom of Colonel Berkeley's, who was riding home from the Norwich boxing match, and had dropped in to drink a cool tankard, and leave a line to say that my Lord Coke's man, the bruiser on whom Mr. George had bet, had grown dizzy and dropped in the first round, affording some fresh sport in bets as to whether he were fairly done for, or only floored for that fight, to decide which properly no doctor had been allowed by the gentlemen to touch the man for a full quarter of an hour. However, Colonel Berkeley would thank Mr. George to settle his little affair by the bearer, or as soon as ever he could make it convenient, for the colonel had his own book to square.

Lastly, as it never rains but it pours, Mr. George had a reminder from my lady that she left him alone to deal with the French Ma'mselle and her friends as he thought fit, though it did not seem a mighty gallant exploit to wage war with two psalm-singing women. It was no business of hers, and she had already taken them all to witness that she washed her hands of it. But if he did not conduct his insulted kinswoman, Milly Rolle, back to the rectory in all honor, without the loss of an hour, or else procure a license, summon some fellow in orders, and be married to his cousin on the spot, she should not allow him to darken her doors again, nor should he have a farthing of her money. If he should venture into her presence, without her leave, to appeal against her sentence, she would go that very day before a magistrate, demand protection from her own son, and swear that her purse, plate, and jewels, if not her life itself, were in more danger from him than from any house-breaker or highwayman, and George Rolle knew whether or not she would be as good as her word.

But of all the contents of the epistle, for which Mr. Lush-

ington craved Madam's pardon—admitting ingenuously that it was as heavy a spell for her to have read thus far as for him to have writ—what concerned Madam and his reverence most was, that they at the rectory were not keener to get their young lady safe, and without notice, out of Mr. George's keeping, than he, Mr. George, was to be quit of her. Madam would understand that Mr. George had paid his cousin every respect, for Mr. Lushington would say, though it might sound a contradiction in terms, that if a Rolle had gone nearer to ruin a woman, he would have stood firmer by her; if he had been a world crueler, he would have been a deal kinder: but pity him for such kindness! Now Mr. George would not rest till he had sent Mr. Lushington helter-skelter after my lady to inform her of his accident, and to swear that Mistress Milly was under the care of an honest landlady till Mr. George should apprise the Miss that he had grown discreet for her sake, and declined the honor of her company any farther, being minded to dispatch her home by any mode she might prefer.

At the first brunt of the offense the young mistress was afeared to face the friends whom she had deeply affronted, and begged to be forwarded instead to the family of an old school-fellow fifty miles on the other side of Reedham, to which she was sent with all care; Mr. Lushington having to plead ignorance that, in her selfish, childish panic, she had not consulted with any of her friends on this step. She had made out her story so as to meet and explain away the surprise felt by the family at her sudden visit. They had been satisfied at first, but a week later they had got an inkling of the mischief into which Mistress Milly had run, and from which she had come fresh to them. Indignant at the deception which had been practiced upon them, and at the odium they might have incurred from receiving a compromised guest, they had refused thenceforth to believe any part of Mistress Milly's story, and with very little ceremony had bundled her off as far as Reedham. There the culprit, more sensible than she had yet been of the error which she had committed, and more alarmed than ever at the idea of meeting her papa, had bethought herself of deferring the evil day while her little stock of pocket-money lasted, and of seeking quarters at the "Rolle Arms," of which Mr. Lushington, in pursuance of an old intention,

had become mine host. The end of it was that Madam and the rector might depend upon Miss being seen to, quietly and "very genteel," till they should claim her, or make known their will concerning her.

"And why on earth, Milly, did you not instantly make known the receipt of this information?" cried the rector, even more moved by Madam's missive than she had been by his. "It is of the first consequence," he went on; "like a reprieve from capital punishment. Did you not think, woman, that it would be the gladdest news I had ever heard?"

"I did not know that you would be so much pleased to hear that the child had been treated as the Hancocks have thought fit to treat her;" and here Madam hesitated with an accent of reproach—"and my news is not four-and-twenty hours old, Philip, while yours is six weeks of such languishing as I hope never to live through again."

The rector made a gesture of impatience.

"What a jumble of guilt, and the consequences of guilt, you women make, that you could fail of such knowledge!—that you could confound the appearance with the reality, and the mortal pain which the last inflicted! Is it ignorance or innocence, as the man says? Or is it from a foreshadowing of the divine pity, which is ready to condone all offenses for the sake of the offender? It doth pass my comprehension, Milly; but this statement, which neither we nor the world have any reason to doubt, blessedly alters the whole matter."

"Then we will at once have the poor, infatuated, forsaken thing back among us again, Philip. My poor dear girl, think how she must have suffered! I dare swear she made no false representation, or told so much as a fib, to these Hancocks, of whom she was always overfond—to trust them before me! But she could not tell what she was doing, and the mean, pitiful wretches rejoiced over her downfall, and were fain to persecute and cast out my unhappy darling."

The rector looked up from a brown study into which he had fallen, with a startled, offended, stern face once more.

"No more of this, dame; don't go to abuse innocent folk, in good truth abused enough already. Have done with such weakness, and selfishness, and crying injustice, when your own child is concerned. The girl has gone grievously

astray in will if not in deed ; in sheer folly, it may be, but that is the more reason she should be brought to a sense of her folly. Had the worst that could have happened befallen her, she would not have wanted the lesson from us so much ; for, sure, the lamentable sin and degradation would have brought its own bitter punishment. But now, after working scandal in a clergyman's household, and bringing herself to the very brink of shame, she will think she has done no harm, and be not a whit abashed nor a whit improved, but go on to compass more giddy romping and gross imprudence. I tell you I will not have it. Bring her back to the rectory at once, and scot-free, quotha ? A pretty instance of discipline to set before my parishioners, and before that little goose of ours, her sister Dolly ! How comes it, I wonder, that we have so much more senseless children than other people's ? Ah, I am aware Philip was a pear of another tree, but he grew as he hung, out in the world, far from our espaliers, which is no compliment to our training. But bring this extremely wrong-headed and reckless young woman—whose greater reproach for her improper behavior is that she is a daughter of mine—under this roof again without her undergoing a sharp probation, and affording security for her modesty and obedience in future —no, verily,” the rector went on, indignantly, but, seeing his wife's blank disappointment and vexation, he turned, took her hand, and said kindly, “ nevertheless, Milly, let us not cease to be everlasting grateful that redemption is possible.” However chagrined and mortified Madam was, she could not find it in her heart to contend any longer with the rector, even had she not returned on the instant to all her old allegiance, believed the rector must be right, and been convinced that farther contention was not only useless but impossible.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### AN UNFORTUNATE YOUNG LADY

THE affair ended in Milly's undergoing a species of rustication not uncommon when girls were treated like naughty children, and children were put into corners and locked into

dark closets. Milly was not allowed to come within six miles of home. She was boarded with an old nurse, who had married Farmer Spud, at Corner Farm, on the edge of the Waäste. Until she should prove that she was sorry for her bold trick, and was prepared to be quiet and careful in future, she should not be allowed to enjoy the dignity and comfort of home and the society of Dolly. But Milly did not arrive very readily at this becoming frame of mind. The rector had conjectured shrewdly as to the effect of her bad conduct on her mind, and took care that in the arrangement for disposing of her on trial she should have no personal interview with any member of her family. She got into a pet at the way in which she was treated, and let them know plainly that she wanted to see none of them, till they should choose to put her on equal terms with them again. She would not have her sister Doll come to Corner Farm to crow over her, and look down upon her. What had she done except have a bit of frolic, such as any body would enjoy if they could, and such as any body but her severe papa would have passed over lightly, more particularly as it had come to nothing? She would hold her head as high as any of them yet.

The rector, or at least Madam, fondly hoped that a few weeks' banishment in mid-winter, to the humble, homely Coventry of Corner Farm, would break Milly's refractory spirit, tame her froward temper, and teach her to gratefully accept her father's grace on any terms. In the mean time, both the rector and Madam could depend upon Dame Spud and her yeoman husband as being trustworthy jailers, sensible and reasonably kind people of their rank; while Madam relieved her yearning love, and helped to defeat her own purpose, by surreptitiously supplying the owners of the farm with a hundred comforts and delicacies. These Milly took sullenly, without observation or acknowledgment; indeed, she grumbled loudly at the absence of others, which were not within Madam's power to lend out.

Grand'mère all the while looked askance at the English practice of forgiveness, coupled with such an ordeal.

“Said I not the pastor was like Jean Calvin? *Si!* but such an act as this was not in the politics of Jean Calvin; this is ‘from the Turk to the Moor.’ Jean Calvin locked up a woman for wearing the hair *en boucles*, and a man for

reading romances ! Yes ! but the culprits were malcontents ; they refused to desist ; it was not without seeking to bring them to renounce their offenses, when the legislator would have pardoned them as freely as the summer wind blows about the corn. Not a man on earth was more generous to a penitent than Calvin. But this English half-and-half mode, this saying, on the right side, ‘ Seest thou, I grant that thou art risen and gone from the post of rebellion, or that thou wishest well to do so, and I pardon ;’ and on the left, ‘ It is true, thy sword is thrown down, and thou art at my feet, but still I dare not trust thee until I punish’—it answers not ; it serves only to harden ; the game is not worth the candle, while simply to cancel the debt might awaken compunction and win devotion. Ah ! my child, dost thou remember the beautiful story of the lord who frankly forgave his servant all the debt that he owed him ? This version is as if the lord had said, ‘ I frankly forgave the one-half, but for the other, thou must bear the consequences, and I shall deal them out in what will seem like a lurking grudge against thee.’ People must be the one thing or the other—judges to condemn, or kings to confer mercy, and not a part of both, with both parts spoiled ; unless, indeed, it be as the pastor preaches, that the broken must be kept from the whole. Truly, that is a solemn truth, which, the broken, who are also broken in spirit, as well as the whole, who preserve their purity in meek fear and trembling, will never deny. But God be praised, here is no question of broken, but of a foolish, spoiled child, happily rescued, in His mercy, from the imminent peril into which she had run.”

At last Madam from the rectory compelled her sore mother’s heart to submit to circumstances. She lowered her colors, made an errand to the Shottery Cottage, and sought a private conversation with Madame Dupuy, mère. She begged her to go and see the culprit, comfort her in the first place, and remonstrate with her in the second. “ Do, dear old Grand’mère ; Philip will not be angry with you for going, you do not come within his forbidden family. I’m sure he’d liefer you went than stayed. It ain’t so far, and I’ll lend the coach for the ride any day. Think what a pleasure it will be for the poor soul to see a face she knows, shut up as she is yonder at Farmer Spud’s in the depth of

winter. If it had been summer, there might have been cowslip-picking, and hay-making, and 'the hole,' and the rustics might have been better borne with, though even then my Milly had no turn for country pleasures, that I could ever find out, unless as an excuse for junketing with young people like herself. Oh me! to think of what my innocent love and darling hath come to—for she is innocent, Grand'mère, of every thing but willfulness and heedlessness, and perhaps a spice of vanity, in going with Mr. George—a villain to make so light of her! It seems just the other day that she was such a pretty baby in a robe and cap, which I was so proud to work for her, though they ate up three months of my precious time; but the rector did not think it wasted, not he. He said if a bride was permitted to delight herself in her jewels, much more a mother in making her child dainty by her deft and patient fingers, so that she did not forget and neglect other poor children; and Philip, my brave little boy, was so fond of his pretty little sister; and now all that is mortal of him lies moldering in an American wilderness, and she is sent away in disgrace to Farmer Spud's. The rector says we ought to praise God that she is in no worse quarters; but I do not always see how that may be, for I can hardly credit that any Mr. George among them could have been monster enough to harm Milly farther than by playing on her fine spirit, and on the giddiness of chits like her—one sees them grow sober and steady enough before long—but few are so good as the rector. However, you are not under a good-man's control, my dear old Madame—that is, your worshipful son, though he has come to middle age, and may be regarded as the head of the house, doth not seem ever to contradict you. I do not understand it, for I have always been accustomed to men of masterful minds; but by your leave I crave to take advantage of it, since I do not hear tidings of my unhappy girl from other than Molly Spud, who sees nought but that she ain't starving herself to death, and don't sit up or walk about of nights. That is mighty fine news; but, bless you, it is not all, and if I don't hear more, I vow my heart-strings will crack."

"A thousand times; I shall go this evening, or to-morrow morning—when you will," said Grand'mère, with the flush of her abounding goodness kindling up her face. "Yes, it

is true, my Hubert does not contradict me; he trusts me like that! It is not good that the hen should crow before the cock, but it is the fashion of French sons to hang the sword to the crook where the mothers are concerned, and when hard words are spoken of *ménages de Paris*, it is but what you call fair, Madam, that this mode of the sons should be remembered in their favor."

"And may I come, Grand'mère?" asked Yolande, half pleadingly, half deprecatingly, as the old woman was preparing for her visit. "You can not ride without me, *ma mère*. Is it not so? You will have ache of the tongue with keeping it still when you see all the novelties of the road; or you will forget, and begin to talk like a mill to the crows and the leverets, and the coachman will think you a *pecque*. You know all that, *ma mère* with the golden mouth, quite fine! Grand'mère, but I will not have it that the golden mouth should be mute as a *mitaine* on a rare ride, or be mistaken for the mouth of a poor senseless monster of a *folle*. Then that poor Milly, Grand'mère, what think you? Will she wish to see me? Will she think I come to triumph over her for my superior wisdom? Will she believe I stay away to show her my contempt? Which do you think?"

"Plain pied, *donzelle*, I believe it is we who will suffer in the interview, and not poor Milly. The child is not wise, is no better than she can help; she is not tender, nor thin-skinned, save where the question is of her pride, her will, her pleasure. The hand of man has not humbled her, and, mark me, it will need the hand of God to do that. They speak much of the hardness, the coarseness, and the spiritual selfishness of the Pharisee; and that is well. They speak much of the softness, the delicacy, and the unselfishness of the sinner; and I think that is not well. It is the Israelite indeed who is mild, noble, and generous, but the sinner only a little morsel more so than the Pharisee. Do I not love the sinner? My God help me! I am a sinner myself—a great sinner for my years, my opportunities, my lessons. But because I would love the sinner, it is necessary that it be for her proper *beaux yeux* that I see her exactly as she is, hard, coarse, selfish in all ranks, conditions, and degrees of sin. You will see. We will visit Miss Milly—you will redder as the fire, and for me, I shall

redden as the turkey-cock ; *tiens !* she will not have more pink than the rose. You will weep like a cascade, and I shall blow my nose, while she will be as dry as the great road on a day in summer, and as cool as a *carrefour* in one of our forests, or as the well of St. Bénoite. You will be timid as a wet hen, she will be brave to the three hairs. Ah, well ! she will be a great deal the sorrier spectacle, and the more to be pitied, if it be with her as it has been ordinarily with the sinners whom I have known before, than if she reddened and wept. Then she might not need us, and we should only be in the way if she had already opened the door to the great and good guest, the Master, the King, who had come in to sup with her, and her alone."

So Yolande went with Grand'mère in the winter afternoon. They left their coach on a by-road, which threatened the younger with a repetition of her overturn, and the elder with a general fracture of her bones, brittle with age. As it was, there was urgent demand both for Yolande's arm and the assistance of Madame Rougeole before Grand'mère could climb the rugged path from the Waäste, the only road to Corner Farm, slippery with ice.

Corner Farm was a humble house, built of unhewn stones, with a thatch roof, and windows four panes square, which looked into a cattle-shed, a sheep-pen, and a pig-sty—a place at which a girl like Milly Rolle, if she had ridden across to it, to call for her old nurse, would, the moment Dame Spud's back had been turned, have held up her hands and cast up her eyes in horror. At the same time she would have exercised her lungs every time she had crossed the threshold, by screeching in imitation of the plovers and snipes on the Waäste, at every colt and heifer she had encountered, and she could not have gone far without meeting specimens of Farmer Spud's stock, in the centre of which he lived, like an ancient patriarch or a modern squatter. Even Grand'mère, who had been accustomed to southern cottages in their own luxuriant, mellow-toned home-growth of maize, vines, gourds, and almond-trees, shrank a little from the bleakness and desolation of this moorland farm. As Madam at the rectory had said, it might in summer have had some homely attractions, with the cow-slips and hay faintly struggling for existence among gorse and heather. But in midwinter the Waäste was a howl-

ing wilderness, and the few cultivated fields were Waästes in their turn, while the cattle, sheep, and pigs were huddled together in the yard, foddered with rotting straw and rushes, and fed on half-gnawed turnips and house refuse. The steep road was a miry trail of black mud, or a succession of jagged impressions of hob-nailed shoes as hard as iron, like a new class of fossils. Corner Farm at this season was not far from being as bad as Siberia to a pampered, empty-headed, and weak girl. Yet it was not without its substantial advantages. It was weather-tight, and as clean within as scrubbing could make it; and it was held healthful when the breath of cattle was counted not a poisoner but a sweetener of air. Farmer Spud and his wife were well-to-do people in their line. There was no want of the necessaries of life, of native wooden chairs, stools, and bed-frames, checked draperies and coarse linen, as well as of plenty of plaiding and carpet bed-furnishings, deep yellow and red earthenware, besides the surreptitious and supplementary contributions from the rectory. And at that time, many a vicarage and parsonage was not much better supplied.

Yolande, with Grand'mère on her arm, knocked long and loud at the solid oaken door, and had plenty of time to inspect the stock, divided from them only by hurdles, and sometimes not by that. Dame Spud was in the back premises, where her clatter among pots and pans, and her deafness, combined to prevent her hearing them. The visitors, however, could distinguish Milly sitting opposite them, before one of the little windows. She remained like a statue, without offering to move, in order to greet them, or to let them in. At last, Farmer Spud, an elderly man, fresh-colored like a winter apple, and arrayed in a long vest and knee-breeches, issued from a shed. He pulled his forelock and said to Grand'mère and Yolande, "Ye be come to see the young leddy, and welcome." But to every word they answered, he said "Anan," only adding an assurance that "t' good wife 'ud trade with them." He then ushered them into the house, calling in lusty tones, "Moll, Moll, ye wench; ye be right down wanted by gentlefolks of young Madam's litter." Molly appeared hastily, with her face withered and yellow, in her flannel hood. She wiped her hands on her striped woolen apron, and the moment she

entered Miles went out, as if he were but a companion weather-cock, no longer wanted on the stage. Molly, in the character of an old nurse and confidential servant, was not unskilled in cautious reserves and judicious asides. She chose to treat her former young mistress as having been in a general way ailing, so as to have had a change of scene resorted to by her friends, on her behalf, as part of her cure. All Molly's speeches were *doubles entendres*, bearing apparently on Milly's bodily health, but really on her mental mood. "Mistress Milly be getting stout again, that she be; but Norwich weren't built on one day; noa, noa, she will not stir to the door yet—not to see the milking, which she were fond of looking at as a babby—but that will come in time. She is able to divert herself most days with her thread-papers, as Madam, her mother, will be mighty glad to learn, for the head and the heart ain't none of them over-bad when a miss can settle to make thread-papers."

Milly was in the act of making her thread-papers—cutting down strips of gaudy card-board, painted with staring flowers, birds, and butterflies, and pasting them together in the requisite shape. She was even more elaborately dressed than usual. She had long gloves and a fan lying beside her, while her slippers feet rested on a square of rag carpet, and a leathern screen stood at her back. She rose and executed a dignified courtesy—such a *salut de jeune fille* as Grand'mère had never beheld before—without blushing in face or trembling in figure, and said "Good-day to you, ladies," in a confident, careless tone.

Grand'mère was excited, fatigued, and ready to drop into the chair which Dame Spud offered her. Yolande had known so few friends that she could not forget this Milly, now in a sort of solitary confinement, doing penance for her delinquency. But Milly seemed to have forgotten the former friendship, or not to recognize that there had been happier times. She was bent on putting a bold face on matters, and carrying them with a high hand, while she did not lend herself in the least to Dame Spud's manœuvre, but proclaimed loudly, with a taunt in her accent, that she had never been better in her life, and that she was as strong as a dairy-maid. She stared Grand'mère and Yolande full in their disturbed, confused faces. She laughed and talked noisily,

though she took care not to drop a syllable which bore upon the rector, Madam, or Dolly. So far from Grand'mère having "to make conversation on the point of a needle," she could barely get in a word to tell Milly how M. Landre, and many French men and women, tinted thread-papers, and made a decent livelihood by it. Milly did not really care for thread-paper flowers and butterflies, any more than for the originals. The only symptom, if it could be called a symptom, of consciousness which she gave, was sundry little snarls and snaps at the singleness of heart which had rendered Yolande her dupe, and at the presence of mind and intrepidity which had enabled Yolande to free herself from the plot which, falling to pieces, had brought grief to Milly. "You need not be so glib in giving your opinion, Ma'mselle" (Yolande was not giving it); "you know you can not see for your nose the very road you are traveling. You are not so much a girl of parts as of prodigious luck, when you can ride away, at a moment's notice, in the middle of the night, with young Squire Gage, and not a dog wag its tail at you for it."

Yolande was confounded and altogether dispirited by her visit. "Grand'mère," she protested, the moment the two were in the coach, "did you ever see such a change? It might have been *de coq-d-l'âne* with Milly when she was simply young and gay, but now it is from brass to adamant."

"Until the next time, my dear," nodded Grand'mère, reassuring Yolande. "She is what I expected. I have seen characters much worse than a poor foolish girl braving her folly out without a smile of the heart, but with *crispations* of the nerves to keep up the rôle which she is overacting furiously. I have seen a sinner *comme il faut, gentille*, a penitent by design and premeditation, as our women of quality were wont to wind all up, according to rule, by becoming, on a set day, *devouée*. Oh, Yolandette, profession is so abominably easy—above all, when it is to profit the professor—that even the professor may cheat himself. I say not, reject him; for who art thou that judgest? But shall thy heart tremble to its core for a fellow-mortal? Shalt thou, if love divine were not an abiding miracle, give up such a one in despair? Let it be then when thou list-

enest to an easy penitent, a fluent confessor and abjurer of his sins, a huge promiser of reformation!"

That visit was the first of many visits which Grand'mère and Yolande paid to Milly during her exile at the Corner Farm. For a time there seemed no door of the girl's heart which was not locked and barred against both them and her kindred, the more surely that her own fault was the great bolt and barrier. Her reception of them was bravado; she would not let them come to close quarters with her, would not let Grand'mère say "her say." "*Ma fille*, we are all sorry and suffering in your sufferings. We all forgive as we hope to be forgiven. Will you not be reconciled to us, as we all trust to be reconciled to God?" Milly would not let Yolande cry, "Milly, we were happy once, when we only liked each other a little, when we had only a little gayety, good-humor, and girlishness between us. At present we have wrong, strife, sadness between us. Alas! that it should be so! But shall we not love each other much, and be as happy as the angels, if we put all these things away from us, without asking any questions, and be Milly and Yolande again, beginning anew by being good girls, and helping each other to be better?"

In the end, as Grand'mère kept firmly to her resolution not to preach until Milly would be preached to, Milly gradually dropped her mask, and showed herself wounded, resentful, wretched. She had "run with the footmen," and they had wearied her, how then could she "contend with the horses?" And if in "the land of peace," wherein she had trusted, they had wearied her, then how would she do in "the swelling of Jordan?" Milly had sense to know that she had made the change in her lot for herself; and that she had been restless and discontented even when she was a petted child, a flattered young mistress, with Dolly for a companion princess, and Madam their mother for their first subject, with fair prospects and a fine prince to be met, either at the castle or at the Rolles' town house, for her portion in the future. Now she was sent away from home to a miserable hovel, as Milly in her indignation called Corner Farm, with no company save a goodman and his wife. Nobody came near her except the French family, whom she had cheated, but who had got the better of her at last. Her fair prospects were spoiled, her fine prince

would not have a gift of her—rather had ridden away, and dismissed her with scant ceremony after she had served his whim. And she had brought all her reverses upon herself. Her papa might never receive her at home again, or if he did, she might not be taken out into company, so that his reception would not signify very much. She could not run off any more, for the very good reason that she had nobody to run off with; neither was she a good hand to plan and carry through an elopement. Mr. George had managed it all before, and her friends “had taken good care that she should not have so much as half a guinea to keep her pocket with.”

Milly tossed her thread-papers into the fire, and sat twirling her thumbs in dire monotonous gloom, like any helpless doting old man or woman, until Grand’mère began to fear for her reason, and set Dame Spud and her good-man to watch their charge by turns night and day, because of those dismal tragedies of horse-ponds and trees, and lying down to sleep the last sleep in solitudes like the Waäste, which were then often enough heard of.

One day, as Grand’mère was parting from Milly, she cried for a boon, though it was only that her little dog Pickle might come to her. “He will not think shame of me: I have not hurt him. Let me have something near me that I used to care for, and that cared for me, before my friends gave me up.”

So Pickle was sent to her; and Milly fondled and spoke to the little creature as he crept into her lap, licked her hands, and whined with joy for the re-union; and every sight and touch of him did her good. “Only a silly little dog,” Molly often heard her murmur; “it knows no better; it is no wiser than I—to reproach, despise, shun, and forget me. It is mighty fine, but mighty foolish of you, Pickle, to behave so very genteelly to your old mistress, who has lost her title even to a little wretch of a lap-dog’s regard.”

The next time Grand’mère came Milly flung herself on the old woman’s shoulder, and opened the very flood-gates of her heart.

“Oh! Grand’mère, why am I punished so much more than other girls who have behaved no better than I?”

“You find? How bitter that is!” sympathized Grand’-

mère, with the utmost compassion. "My child, it is not the being more punished, it is not that you have not done worse than other girls; life was wrong before you committed this trespass, these ten, twenty years, since you were born. You have not been a happy girl, Milly—not so happy as you might have been—not so happy as my Yolande, and she is an exile like myself; and we have our cares and troubles—yes, indeed, our cares and troubles. You could not die to-morrow, and say farewell to the world in peace, as Yolande could."

"I wish I could. Oh! mercy! Grand'mère, I almost wish I could."

"But no, you can not, unless you say, This suffices. What am I but a poor, ignorant, sinful girl? And it is not that I have not sinned to be punished, but that I have done nothing save sin since I came into the world, and deserve nothing save punishment at Thy hands. *Mon Dieu*, is this the reason why our Lord and Saviour did and suffered Thy will? If I believe that, I shall have a load lifted from my heart—I shall bow down in adoration—I shall look up and smile and sing. More than that, I shall say, 'Thy will be done for all my small suffering.' More than that, I shall say, 'Lord, with the help of Thy Holy Spirit, I, even I, who have lived for nothing but myself and vanity, and the flesh and the devil, I shall do Thy will.'"

"Oh, Grand'mère, I will try. I have done with myself; I am sick of serving myself. If I sought to serve another, and that other—oh, Grand'mère!—God himself—would He help me? would He do it for Christ's sake, who died for sinners? I have not to be taught that, Grand'mère. Sure, I am a Christian, and my papa is a good clergyman; but I want something to make me free to live and die a life and death worth having. Will you teach me, Grand'mère? You shake your head. Yolande, then; though she can not be so wise as you? No! Who?"

"God himself will teach his silly, wayward, sinful child; He will lead her, and bear with her. Christ will carry her case before the throne, as He carried her offenses in His body on the tree. The Holy Spirit will come down and dwell with her, and make her frail body the temple of the Holy Ghost; and all if Milly Rolle will only ask for it. Milly may have heaven from God for the asking."

## CHAPTER XXX.

“STONE WALLS DO NOT A PRISON MAKE.”

MILLY had opened her heart to a new influence, very different from any that had been in it before. And this influence worked like all other influences which are of God, whether it be the quickening and growth of a seed of grain, or the call and obedience of a human heart. In the case of Milly Rolle there was not the same striking outward manifestation of grace as in the case of the rough livers of Sedge Pond. Their conversion took place at a great crisis —a time of trial and refreshing; and so their transformation from brutal indulgences and the brutal expression of foul thoughts to something higher and purer was very apparent. They were men and women existing in the primitive state and of the primitive stuff which melts like the rock before the fire, and, cleansed as by fire, comes out of the furnace strangely clean and soft, and pours itself out in floods of elevation and ecstacies of thanksgiving. The conversion of Milly Rolle from self-will to God, from frivolous worldliness to spending her life for her Father and her brethren, was as real, but it could not in the nature of things be so conspicuous or so demonstrative. She was conscious of her want, nay, more, she was contrite for her waste, and she earnestly wished and hoped to do better. She believed with all her heart that one reason why the Lord and Saviour of men had died, was simply to bear her penalty, and to enable her to do better. And all this because God's love had shone upon her in her desolation, and shown her how good, wise, and tender He was, and how bad, foolish, and regardless of Him she had been. Therefore she came to Him now, and cried unto Him, because He was her earliest, her latest Friend, her Creator and her Father, the beginning of her life and the end of her being.

But with all these faint quiverings and pulsations of a new life beyond herself and yet within herself, Milly was the old Milly still. She was still weak, and not overwise,

and encumbered with old ignorances and affectations, which had become a second nature to her. She began to be sorry, and in her sorrow to have some hope, faith, and charity. She began to pray, and to feel inclined to ask her father's and mother's forgiveness in place of refusing to forgive them. She was even inclined to be a little grateful to Farmer Spud and his dame, for their cordial goodwill and assiduous services, as well as to be kind to Grand'mère and Yolande, and glad to welcome them to Corner Farm. And she gave the best proof of all by taking Grand'mère's advice, and trying to work a little, and to be interested in her work, whether it were at thread-papers or helping Molly with her coarse patching and darning. She took some pleasure in praying, and in going through a chapter of the Bible.

But it is the will of God to rear and train men and women, as he rears and trains animals and plants, by slow degrees and by successive stages. The Corner Farm life was still the extreme of dullness and mortification to Milly Rolle. She could not help moping and writhing, though now only at intervals, and not without calling herself to account for it, and struggling against it. The rector was a tenacious man, who patiently carried out his purposes, and exacted from himself every jot and tittle of their fulfillment, else he would have put an end to Milly's probation on the first symptom of her amendment. As it was, he kept her at the Corner Farm till the expiry of the term which he had fixed upon for her banishment, and till the scandal of her running away had blown over in the parish and neighborhood. He did not trust himself to go near her, lest he should be overcome. He only relaxed so far as to allow Dolly to go to her sister. Dolly stared shyly at first, and then sat hand in hand with Milly longer than they had ever sat before. Then the culprit had interviews with Madam, when she ran into her mother's arms and lay there. Mr. Hoadley, in his new life of a devoted priest caring for all his flock, overlooked not this young member who had stumbled and gone out of the way, whose knees were feeble, and whose hands hung down. Nor was he interdicted in his ministry when he solemnly asked the rector's permission to exercise it upon the wanderer. At first she shrank from Mr. Hoadley's counsel as being a fresh humiliation,

but afterward she thought better of it, and not only accepted it as a part of her penalty, but, recognizing by a new instinct the young man's sincerity, she was affected and encouraged by her old companion's teaching.

But Milly Rolle had great natural disqualifications, compared with Yolande Dupuy, for profiting by such an experience as that of Corner Farm. Yolande was profound, and Milly shallow; Yolande was refined, and Milly rude; Yolande was reserved, and Milly accessible. Yet for all that, Yolande would have been at home in an English Siberia, and would have found a thousand objects of interest and observation a life-time before Milly Rolle. Yolande would have learned to talk to Dame Spud and her good man, and discovered topics in common with them. She would have made herself acquainted with the local names and the rural annals—with all the bad snow-storms, floods, and blights, and the lives lost in the Waäste. And this she would have done even though the northern side of it had not “marched” with the farms of the Mall, and the Mall itself had not been “most Waäste” in Farmer Spud’s grandfather’s day. In return Yolande would have given Grand’mère’s ample chronicle of all the country eras of vine crops and silk-worms. She would have made friends with the whole stock at Corner Farm, till the great mild Juno eyes of the oxen would have looked into hers with a familiar greeting, and the plaintive bleat of the sheep would have become an appeal for sympathy, instead of an utterance of terror. She would have gone wild to coax the Norfolk hawk from the “holt” of ash and alder, the bittern from the “lode,” the gulls and terns from the nearest “broad.” She could no more have confined her regards to a dog with a silver spoon in its mouth, like Pickle, than Monsieur Landre and Caleb Gage could have limited theirs. So when Yolande came at last to lighten a heavy week of Milly’s enforced seclusion, safe in the surveillance of humble friends like the Spuds, and when the freedom and good-will of girlish intercourse—more in earnest and better worth now—were fully restored between them, she became cognizant of a hundred novelties in the homely lonely farm-house, and a hundred attractions and delights for her there.

She began with helping to break the icicles that hung

from the low eaves and the water-trough, which stood in the centre of the yard like the fountain in the centre of a French village ; and when she got a lesson from Dame Spud in milking her favorite cow, her lessons did not end with that. She was annoyed at Milly's apathy, and tried to rouse her mind to the solaces and gratifications to which she was both blind and deaf.

“ My child,” remonstrated Yolande, “ I do not hate this place, oh *ça* ! not at all. I should love it if Grand’mère were but here, and spring and summer come again, with the calves and the lambs, the cry of the lapwing, and the budding of the sallow. As it is, I kiss my hand to all the grave, sober, grown-up company of steers and heifers, rams and ewes. I make love to Jacques the house-dog, my gallant, who would not think twice of eating me up, if he did not know my halting French tongue and my grey French face. I cajole Mother Spud into giving me grain for the starving little beggars of wheat-ears and titmice. But I can not feed the great sea-eagle—only, I think of it,” broke off Yolande, in excitement, “ he comes as far as the Waäste in hard seasons. Without a doubt I must write a *poulet*—a little chicken of a note—to my dear Monsieur Landre, that he may come here next summer.”

“ But who is this Mr. Landre of whom you talk so often ? ” asked Milly, her curiosity stirred.

“ Don’t you know Monsieur Landre ? Ah ! to be sure you do not know him,” answered Yolande. “ He is ravishing, that man ; he has ferocious merits : he is as old as Grand’mère, and he was at the galleys for the faith, only think of it ! and he has survived the awful galleys ! Seest thou, Milly ? It is not all bad here. Try it for yourself, my life.”

“ Never, Yolande,” protested Milly gloomily ; “ I could never be content with so wretched an abode and such low diversions when my papa is a clergyman of the rank of a rector. I have been brought up so differently, with every thing handsome and genteel about me. My goodness ! Ma’melle, don’t you know that we have fourteen rooms in the rectory, besides a china-closet and a still-room, and that there are not such peach wails and holly hedges for ten miles, out of the castle gardens, as we have ? And you bid me be comfortable in a pig-sty ! Not that Molly ain’t

cleanly," Milly quickly corrected herself; "my mamma made her that, but this is like a pig-sty to what I have been accustomed to; yet you call on me to admire when summer comes. Summer is not here;" and here Milly interrupted herself again to moralize: "Summer is six months away—who knows what may happen before summer comes! But though summer were here, what have I to admire but a herd of wild cattle frightening me out of my wits, a half-reclaimed field or two with ugly roots and bad herbs sticking through the grass and the corn, and the coarse weeds of the black and brown Waäste, which my papa says is the reproach of the country?"

"*Eh bien*, Milly, there are some things for which I love the *lande* more than either your garden or ours; I should be a suspicion sorry if it were all broken up and cultivated to-morrow, though I should be *bête* if I were so. It is so fresh, as if it had just come direct from God's hands, and were given to the wild creatures which He feeds, and no man tames. When man needs it indeed, good! let him take it and conquer it; the world was made for man, and he is right to exercise his dominion over it, and to rejoice in his dominion. But until then, is it not also good that there should be No Man's Land, where all men, rich and poor alike, are free to go out in the cool of the day, and to walk, each by himself, with God? It is thus in the depths of our forests, which I never saw, and on the heights of the everlasting mountains."

Milly yawned. "I can not understand you, Yolande; you are such a strange girl," she added, amending her confession with dignity; "sure, savage forests and mountains must be horrible and shocking; and no civilized being in her senses would go near them if she could help it, to be devoured by she-bears and hooded crows. I'll tell you what I admire—the castle park and the gardens, and the town meadows at Reedham, where some of the townspeople who have their gardens in that direction have laid out bowers and summer-houses and hermitages and grottoes; with foreign shrubs, and artificial rocks and shell-work; and they have the water diverted from the river into mimic cascades and sweet little lakes. All that is mighty fine, and I affect it, for I am a person of taste; but I am like my lady, Ma'mselle, who says she can only admire nature *orné*, not

nature in *dishabille*, with her hair in curl-papers. I believe it is the polite sentiment of the day ; and therefore it is no wonder, and nobody can blame you, that you are not up to it. After all, it don't matter, when we are vile sinners, and at the worst get much better than we deserve. If we were like the angels, we would not, as Mr. Hoadley tells us, look about for lilies and gillyflowers to waste our precious time upon them, but see a world lying in wickedness, and make haste to escape, like Lot out of Sodom, and draw our neighbors after us, as brands snatched from the burning."

"For me, I do not think the angels refuse to look on the works of God," replied Yolande, musingly. "Why, Milly, they are the very sons of God who shouted aloud for joy when the great frame-work of the world was complete. And the fiercest of His creatures also praise Him—hail, snow, and vapor, and stormy wind fulfilling His word. How much more, then, the still, small lilies breathing only purity and peace, which the Master himself bade us consider. Monsieur Hoadley does wrong, great wrong, in slandering and denouncing God's flowers and God's world."

Milly drew back offended. "You must be very wise, Yolande, to know better than your teachers. Much good the silly, senseless flowers ever did a vain, worldly girl like me!"

"Pardon me Milly," begged Yolande, quickly, "I did not mean to judge the pastor. I have known other teachers—Grand'mère, old Monsieur Landre, and others—who thought quite otherwise, and who loved the world, as being a step to God's throne, and all its creatures as His subjects. The most of them are more loyal and more faithful than we are. But I did not mean that they spoke to all alike, or that all could hear God's voice and see God's face in them ; and where that is wanting, that desperate word vanity is written on them all—silly, senseless flowers, as you call them, greedy or cruel animals, fit only for the bouquet, the child's lap, the essence-vat, the game-bag, or to serve as a meal for your hooded crow. But, Milly, even then, the fault is in the eyes, and not in the flowers and the animals."

"Ah, there, you are at your flights again, Ma'mselle. Upon my word, you require taking down ; and here comes good Mr. Hoadley on our mare Blackberry, just in the nick

of time to do it, and to put us on some more improving discourse."

And Mr. Hoadley it was, who had ridden through the sludge and the chill of midwinter to study the spiritual condition which he was interested in, and to do his best to rouse still farther from its hardening slough of selfishness, frivolity, and impenitence the soul of his rector's stray daughter, who was come to a sense of her error. He went about his business the more ardently that he had himself been a sinner of the same order, with less excuse and with greater condemnation, for he had not merely higher faculties, but he had received a commission, and been consecrated a priest. He had neglected his commission, and well-nigh forgotten his consecration; but he was in earnest at last to bid Milly enter with him and all the other workers into the vineyard, and to work manfully and womanfully for what remained of the day, till each should receive the penny, the common token of the Master's gracious acknowledgment of repentance and obedience, whether late or early.

Full of his purpose, which was noble, Mr. Hoadley came and sat with the girls in Dame Spud's kitchen. He missed none of the accessories which in other circumstances he would have been inclined to overvalue as much as Milly. He had brushed aside whatever detained him in his new line of action—the poetasting and the mooning of those years which he had lived to plainly term his unregenerate days. He treated the tastes which had then occupied him as petty, irrelevant trifles, if not as insidious snares.

To Mr. Hoadley was propounded the question in dispute: "Sir, will you tell us if you think immortal souls are warranted in being engaged—not to say engrossed—with mortal things, and not only with fine furniture and fine clothes, savory food, such as friar's chicken and cherry pie, but with posies and garden-knots, and such poor tiny creatures as wagtails and humblebees? for Ma'mselle here and some of her friends pass over none of these, which also, good lack! perish in the using."

With his own evil experience staring him full in the face, Mr. Hoadley could give no other answer than the impassioned decree, "As for your word 'warrant,' Madam, I can not reply to it. But I dare to say, as the creature is subject to vanity—the poor verses, for example, in which I used to

dabble, thinking it no shame to waste more time on polishing their prettinesses than might have served to preach a couple of sermons in different villages, ten miles apart—I am of the mind, with regard to belles-lettres, pictures, pieces of statuary, and profane music, that since they may become such stumbling-blocks to half-crazy fools who hanker after them, they had better be curbed, clipped, and kept in their own places, and these very poor places too, or else rejected altogether along with the vile horses and cards on which madmen lay their lives and their deaths."

"Do you hear that, Ma'mselle? Ain't you floored?" cried Milly, triumphantly.

But Yolande, though she did not argue with Mr. Hoadley, said to herself in her French fashion, "*N'importe*, Yolande; never mind, my child. Judge not by appearances, but judge righteous judgment—but when will men, even the best of them, do that? Ah! when will they not judge by what is expedient, judicious, *convenable*—by how men will judge of them, and whether or not their followers will be offended? As if the Lord did not offend his followers, and many of them walked no more with Him; but He did not on that account humor and cheat their prejudices. No, no. Why will they fear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as these English say, when God is true, and loves truth on the lip as well as in the inner man? The abuse of a matter is not to rule the use, even in horses and cards. That is the righteous judgment—I am certain of it. And as to the least little plant—the hyssop that springeth from the wall, and the midges of animals—these are among the little ones whom we are not to offend, and who are sent to us to teach us and make us better, if we will only learn and grow good. I know that, and am certain of it also."

Nevertheless Yolande was pleased when Mr. Hoadley, with an inspiration which carried him far beyond his old, affected, fractious self, told the girls of what he was doing among the vice, misery, and inconceivable ignorance of Sedge Pond. He craved their sympathy for the poor woman, over whose heavy wooden cradle, which held her twin ten-days-old children, her husband and her eldest son had fought and fallen at the christening feast, kicking over the cradle in their struggle, and casting one child beneath their

feet, where its spark of light was stamped out before the reeling, raging, unconscious murderers could be dragged off its small body, and injuring the other so heavily that there was great danger of its growing up a helpless cripple. And he solicited their solace for the patriarch of the village, a hoary old man of ninety, whose children, past the vigor but not past the lusts of life, were so full of their own riots and bawls, that they elbowed aside and forgot the gaunt relic of the past, and savagely taunted and mocked him when they were reminded of him.

Yolande thought it was good to see Milly's blue saucer eyes grow deeper and darker, and fill with tears at such recitals, while she nervously stroked Pickle's white curls, and looked into the dog's liquid eyes. She also thought it was good when Mr. Hoadley read to them from Christiana's progress in the great pilgrimage, and Milly, who had never really cared for or comprehended a reading higher or nearer to her than the dry bones of history, a mock pastoral, a languishing or farcical song, or the broadsheet confession of a hanged highwayman, had new faculties aroused within her while she listened breathlessly to such difficulties and struggles as had till now fallen flat on deaf ears and a deaf heart. She was greatly impressed and edified when Mr. Hoadley's explanation and application proved the struggles to be her very own, and was so full of Christiana as the representative of herself, of Madam, of Dolly, of Yolande, and of every woman she had ever known, that she ceased to see her present wounded, disgraced self, or Pickle, or Yolande, or Mr. Hoadley, or the Spuds' farm, but hung alone on the dream and its interpretation.

Yolande called the scenes with Mr. Hoadley good, though she was a little shy of her own share of his visits to the Corner Farm, until she received a smart lesson, teaching her that a long memory is not always an advantage, and that girlish vanity is the height of folly. When she returned to Grand'mère, Yolande made a strange request. "Beat me, *ma mère*, before it be too late," she demanded valiantly,

"And why should I beat you at this stroke of the clock, *petite*?" answered Grand'mère, with twinkling eyes.

"To beat the naughtiness and giddiness out of me, Grand'mère," asserted Yolande, shaking her head.

"That would require so thick a stick that I could not wield it ; I leave that till I marry thee, Yolandette, when I trust, from thy own tale, that thy husband may have a stouter arm. But what is the tale, *fille*?"

"Well, Grand'mère, I have great shame of it ; for my scornfulness is too bad when the young pastor is so good now, and when Milly is a changed girl, as sober and earnest as a judge in her affair, and her affair is repentance and beginning life anew like a ransomed, dutiful child. How should I sit in the seat of the scorner, Grand'mère, besides being *tête montée*, to think that Monsieur Hoadley likes to look at Milly to-day, as well as to lecture her ! He has thought over her history till he has taken it to himself, and can not separate it from his own, and dreams and knows not what will be the next chapter, until he forgets what he was going to say, and is on the eve of saying something to Milly in quite a different *rôle*. For Milly, she knows only that Monsieur, at whom she was wont to laugh for his Methodism, has too much goodness, wisdom, and kindness for her ; and the more of kindness he has, the more of contrition and brokenness of heart has Milly.

"Go, Yolande !" cried Grand'mère, as she waved off the announcement, incredulous, and even a little indignant, and altogether unable to receive it. "You deceive yourself, with your *historiettes* of the man who could not hear the word of evil against you without giving you up as fast as the young squire of the Mall gave you up. Now, don't grow red and white, Yolande ; it was no fault of yours that two men had evil minds to judge evil of a girl on a word or a look—the look of an affair. Bah ! I would not have given my old squire, the friend of the Frenchman, for all the young bears in the Pyrenees. But the young pastor spoke of reclaiming you, as the young squire did not presume to do. Caleb Gage, *fils*, made public recantation and renunciation of his error in a manner which Monsieur the Pastor has not thought fit to do. He has not come to me, and said, 'Grand'mère, I made one great, proud, uncharitable, miserable mistake,' as he ought to have done."

"Grand'mère," interrupted Yolande, "the young pastor has weightier matters to think of—good, great work, I assure you."

"Weightier matters than to do justice ! Say, then, would

it not help instead of hinder his good work if he saw how to do justice, and did it, even in the bagatelle of an old woman's feelings? He thought enough of my feelings once upon a time, did he not? And behold the young pastor, whom you bid me contemplate as having a *penchant* for a girl who has not the word but the deed of evil, in so far as having been indelicate, imprudent, and undutiful was concerned—what have I to do with such an inconsistent young pastor? Go to the wars with such a pastor! I hope you do not grow a coquette, Yolandette."

"I hope not, Grand'mère," said Yolande, laughing. "I tell you I have no reason because of your friend the pastor. I shall dress the hair of St. Catherine for him. Believe me, Grand'mère, he does not think me at present a hundredth part so interesting as Milly, and not worthy to hold a candle to her, let her have been ever so naughty. It is a frightful misfortune for me, but I will do my utmost to survive the mortification."

Grand'mère was always appeased and coaxed by her child's gayety, and when she thought over the report, and brought to bear upon it the stores of her experience, she came to regard it in quite another light, though it took some time to reconcile her to it.

"Oh, violins of the village! that a pastor who had admired a swan should turn to a goose, though a disappointment in an *affaire de cœur* causes the victim either to be blind or to see double for nine days, and during the precarious interval he may marry his grandmother or the *fade* of the village. But why should I beat the pie, the parrot?" continued Grand'mère, tapping Yolande's cheek and detaining the girl by her side. "She has quick eyes and a quick tongue, but it is the nature of her sex, and I know that Yolande has less of a pie and a parrot than any woman save the good Philippine. Extremes meet, one can not deny it, and there is a generosity and a generosity—a generosity which is vain, and a generosity which is humble. Monsieur the Pastor's generosity is a little touched with vanity. Not true, hé? Well, why should we grudge it to him? It is a world better than churlishness. And why should I beat you or any one else, *cocotte*, because the good God has helped these two young persons by putting a mutual understanding and affection into their hearts, which may make their growth in

grace and their future lives easier? Shall I say that their desire for God is not pure because they have learned through it to desire each other? Say it who will, I say it not. If we love not our brother whom we have seen, how shall we love our Father whom we have not seen? God, is He not the God of the heart as well as of the conscience? What am I that I should judge others? Nay, my daughter, the rector, whom thou hast called a Spartan father, will not be harsh here. When the young pastor will go to him and say, with sudden insubordination and indignation, 'Monsieur my Rector, thou are too severe to thine own flesh and blood. I see it, and I will tell you so; for I have formed an attachment to your daughter Milly, into which her little *faux pas* does not enter, or if it enters, I love her only the better for it, now that she is sorry for it, and I can shelter her from the consequences, and put it out of sight and mind. Monsieur my Rector, I ask your daughter in marriage with the blessing of God—to end her probation and mine, and to begin a joint life of service in His Church and at His altar.' Think you that the Spartan father will be incensed or implacable at that discourse? I say, no. He will be amazed, though he might have seen it all along. Perhaps—for this rector is honest and cutting as a knife—he will reply at first, 'Monsieur my Curé, think well what you are about; my daughter has not been so discreet as I would have wished, and if indiscretion is bad in a pastor's daughter, it is worse in a pastor's wife.' On that the young pastor will protest manfully, 'I have no fear; Milly will never be foolish again, and the grace of God is with us to help us.' What then? The rector will smile and frown, and talk of starving on a curate's salary, and mean it not at all, but begin to think what he can save and spare for the young couple, and take his curé's arm while they consult, and lean on it as he has not leaned on it before. As for Madam, she will fall on the young pastor's neck, and say she has again found a son; and then the rector will smile more sadly, and say to himself, 'A son *comme il faut*, but a different son from my Captain Philip'—*voilà tout!*'

And Grand'mère abruptly ended her little drama triumphantly.

Grand'mère was right to a hair's-breadth. It was only Dolly who pouted and cried out in objection, and Grand'-

mère was required to take her to task and bring her to order. " Didn't our Milly run 'away and make a fool of herself, and wasn't our papa mortal angry at her? and now she is to have a husband and a house before me. It looks as if it were just because she fell into disgrace, for I'm main sure he never thought of looking at her before. I grant you, it is no great sort of a man and a house she will have—I would not have had a gift of them; still, it is the name of them, and it ain't right that Milly should have even the name of preferment before me now, after what is come and gone; I tell you, I do not like it, Grand'mère Dupuy."

" Paper bag! my little girl, you must take the world as you find it. There is no right such as you think of in the world; it would be a worse world than it is if there were. As to the big preference, I know none that the good God gives us for being virtuous, or faithful, or devout, except what is contained in the saying, ' See how great things he or she must suffer for my sake.' That is true, Dolly, and I would not be the sacrilegious wretch to throw a stone at the afflicted, because I believe that they are, veritably, the anointed of the Lord."

But the queerest turn which events and opinions took, was with regard to the lonely, homely Corner Farm itself. Dame Spud and her good man were growing old, and had already had thoughts of retiring from the leadership of the van of civilization against the Waäste, to spend the remnant of their days by the hearth of a married daughter in the snugness and sociality of Sedge Pond, where it would be an easy walk for Dame Spud to go up every day to the rectory, with wool and yarn knitted hose, to wish her old mistress good-morning, and taste her cakes and cream-cheese.

So the farm, with its field or two of thin corn and rushy pasture, and its stock, was to be let to a new tenant. Houses were not plentiful in the neighborhood of Sedge Pond, and the income of a curacy, on which brave and resolute women, as good ladies and gentlemen as their descendants, married on the right hand and on the left, was so small, that most curates' parsonages were not a whit better than the Corner Farm-house could be rendered by a little papering and painting, cherry-tree wood and chintz. And the honest, simple mode of eking out a living by undertaking, with the help of an experienced farm-servant, to cultivate a

few acres, was reckoned a resource by no means unbecoming a gentleman and a priest. It was the lot finally fixed on for Mr. Richard Hoadley and Mistress Milly Rolle.

“Ah! that poor Milly,” reflected Yolande in dismay when she heard of it; “what banishment for life! What exile must it be, with the sentiments of Milly! She will pine away and perish, even with the consolations of religion and the company of the young pastor, in that poor Corner Farm.”

“*Tiens!* the wind has changed,” alleged Grand’mère. And so it had; for when Yolande went to visit Milly at the rectory, where she was reinstalled in the creditable, sedate responsibility and grave dignity of the rector’s eldest daughter, just about to be married to his trusty curate, she found, to her bewilderment, and to the soft tinkle of Grand’mère’s laughter, that Milly’s tastes in reference to Corner Farm had undergone a complete revolution. At this later date she was all for the charms of a humble rustic home, for spinning-wheels—though she could not spin a stroke—for pet lambs and calves, notwithstanding that she had always run away from the merest foal, and declined to say bo to a goose, for making bands and mending cassocks; and, though she had not done a stitch of useful work in her life, she took the whole task of it on her shoulders without a moment’s hesitation. She was quite full of gathering plovers’ eggs and picking mushrooms, and preparing the early supper and serving it to the tired curate, who had been laboring all day among the poor and needy, and who would not disdain to bring home the stranger and the wanderer to share the shelter and the hospitality of a lowly, but for that very reason a freer, as well as a more bountiful roof. So Milly’s ditty rang—an echo of Mr. Hoadley’s. She even went so far as to remind Yolande of a crystal rill, which she declared trickled over a mossy bed close by the farm, and which Yolande could not at all remember; and she waxed enthusiastic about a peep of a grove, where she and Mr. Hoadley might erect a seat, which, as the grove consisted of three and a half bent, blasted, superannuated ash-trees, out of place on the Waäste, and only making its desolation more felt, Yolande could not help regarding as the most forlorn objects breaking the horizon.

“How tired I am of all this pomp and show!”—Milly

confided to the puzzled, diverted Yolande—"not that I blame my papa and my mamma and Doll, for they have never known any thing else, nor been brought face to face with Nature to fall in love with her. How I long to get back to my dear modest farm-house, with its thatch and its house-leek—Richard says there must be a house-leek—and its delightful dumb cattle all among the wilds. Of course I know that these are vanities too, Ma'mselle, and that I must not make idols of them any more than of cedars, and ebony chairs, and brocade gowns. I have not learned to know my Mr. Hoadley so well, and to be in his confidence, without having heard that needful warning. But one can not help being mightily taken with Nature when one has come to love her, and to lose taste for art and finery, with all their poor pretense "

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE GATHERING OF THE STORM.

THE spring awoke at Sedge Pond. But it came intermittently with bars of warm brooding sunshine, in which buds swelled and grass stirred amid gentle pipings of song. The dull, dead winter air was alive again for an hour or two, and there were bright fieldlets of blue sky, in which white mountains were piled up gloriously like Islands of the Blest. But all was checkered before the day was done by the scowl of low grey clouds, and the shrieks of the piercing north-east wind, which carried in its train the sting of cutting hail and dash of drenching rain. And by some secret sympathy the social and the moral world seemed to reflect the fitful spring weather.

The old squire of the Mall had left his son with great discretionary power in the final settlement of his affairs. The young man was much engaged during the winter and early spring in fitly executing, to the best of his belief, his father's will, and in journeying into neighboring counties to consult with relations who were united with him in his trust.

Peace and gladness prevailed in Sedge Pond and at the Shottery Cottage. There was talk of an early seed-time, a fresh brilliant summer, and a fruitful harvest, intersprinkled

with remarks about the fine doings at Mistress Milly Rolle's marriage with good young Mr. Hoadley.

But a change soon came over the people one and all, from the ale-house to the Shottery Cottage. There began to be restless, dissatisfied, gloomy prophecies of a backward season, a cold rainy summer, and a bad harvest. Fainter mutterings of national grievances and injuries reached the sodden, distorted, rankly-overgrown minds of Sedge Pond. Late in reaching, they only entered the more firmly, and threatened a terrible crop of blind, furious prejudice when they sprang and ripened. And so the villagers came to judge that if there were failures in the wars, and mistaken foreign policy in government, resulting in heavier taxes and damage to trade, and grinding still harder the hard-ground faces of laborers and small farmers, nothing was to blame for it but the wanton truckling to foreigners for pieces of velvet, sets of lace, china babies, and pug dogs, which fine gentlemen like Lord Rolle and his brother could not live without. But the gentry were dependent on foreigners for other supplies than these. They could not get up their screeching Italian operas, their dishes which no plain Englishmen could name, nor their evil domestic vices, which polluted and corrupted the country, without the help of some Madame, or Ma'mselle, or Senora. It was high time the country were well rid of such cattle, and if it were true that prices were to be high and food scarce, it stood to reason that the people should put useless mouths out of their quarters, more especially when they were the mouths of villainous spies, gabbling treason and plotting treachery against their foolish hosts and entertainers. The natives of Sedge Pond could, of course, much better understand a strong instance of such folly immediately before their eyes, than the complicated sources of maladministration and abuse of public interest and public funds, which were removed to a distance from them. Old hairs to pluck with the Huguenots, state crimes, some as good as a century old, were revived and bruited about as matters of yesterday in Sedge Pond, and, above all, over the tables in the ale-house. Mutterings of the monstrous bounty which the king in his infatuation paid to these old enemies and false allies, while his own loyal and straightforward subjects were working and starving on scant wages, served like the wind to stir up

and kindle into a flame the smoldering brands of grudging indignation.

Even the refugees who at this time passed through Sedge Pond oftener than usual, men whose brown or blue suits were for the most part only remarkable for being punctiliously long in the skirts and high at the ears, but not a bit less threadbare than those of their neighbors, were nervously conscious of suspicion and spite dogging their footsteps. For this and for other reasons, Monsieur confined himself and his friends more closely to his private room, where they interchanged and examined trade parcels and Huguenot papers until far into the night, leaving little time for social entertainment, and hardly so much as an opportunity for the visitors to greet so venerable a mother among the Huguenots as Grand'mère. He bundled away the strangers with the coach next morning, and stood guard upon them till the last moment.

"Grand'mère," observed Yolande, "my father must be very busy with so many customers and agents constantly coming to him. Besides, he has his journeys to London and Norwich, which I observe he has doubled this last year. I do believe it, he must be growing rich, and I shall be a great heiress, and shall find a charity one fine day like that of the Mall, or a hall in a college like that of Sedan and Saumur, where your relative was professor. Is it not so? For all the boxes with my poor work lie powdered with dust, never sent away since the day of the year. I should like well enough to be an heiress, but, Grand'mère, I do not like my poor work to be forgotten, and must I still work to have more of it packed up, powdered, and left staring me in the face beside the commode and the *malles* every time I go into my father's room?"

"You must work still, my little work-woman," said Grand'mère, somewhat absently, and with a little worry in her placid face as she bent over the caraways and heliotropes in her window. "We must all work in faith, our whole lives long, and we must not think too much of being heiresses, not even of the kingdom of heaven, though that is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, where there is no moth, nor rust, nor thief, no, nor contrabandist nor plotter—I believe it well. It is necessary that we think of God who works, and of how work is good

in itself, and duty good in itself. All things are very good, *petite*, and we may need the help of the least of them yet. I tell you, Yolande, as I told Dolly yesterday, that on this crumbling bit of earth there is no rest or prosperity promised to us. No, truly, there is strife and tribulation, and no promotion save that of suffering. Nothing is sure but death. If we march under our Leader's orders and carry His cross, which was His ensign, it is necessary that the battle rage loudest and longest round us, that we become a spectacle to men and to angels, and it does not seem to me that this can be helped any more than His agony and passion. Yes, it is sad and terrible, Yolande, though not so much so to you as to me; for you are one of the recruits, who are all for the prison and the death, of which, like Peter, you know nothing; but I know a little of what the prison and the death are—a living grave and a grinning skeleton, except for the light which shines above and beyond them; and it is that which must fill our eyes."

Yolande wondered why Grand'mère should answer her so solemnly when she herself had spoken lightly, almost jestingly. She was farther perplexed that Grand'mère should put her off when she attempted to investigate what was passing around, and puzzle her by wide, homely, significant phrases.

"If your little finger tell you a secret," insisted Grand'mère, "repeat it not to your thumb—it is a prying, meddlesome, seditious rogue, that thumb. Women and girls are made to be seen, and not heard, where the affairs of men and fathers are concerned. There was once a clever woman who could not be still as a mouse, who could not wait like a statue, and the consequence was that she woke up one morning and found herself an executioner; and, horror of horrors! she had been the Monsieur Paris to her own family. She had meant no harm, she had not known what she was about, but she had not been still. Ah! yes, stillness is a great virtue, though Solomon did not speak so much of it as of strength and honor. But I think a greater than Solomon praised it when He praised the better part which should not be taken away from—a woman. And, oh! the marvel, how He praised the weak women—this one for her faith, that one for her generosity, and that other for her meek reverence. Ought we then to shrink

from meeting the fire, and standing in the breach when He wills it?"

But sometimes Grand'mère herself escaped from the thraldom of anxiety, doubt, and apprehension which had laid hold of her. Her suspicions and fears would then appear to her as chimeras bred of the past troubles of her long and changeful life. She would prattle with the blithest about the spring, for which the old tenderly yearn, and about the summer which was coming, and about the young couple whose fortunes lay all before them, and to whom she had been a friend indeed, and with regard to whom, therefore, she was entitled to have the grace of loving.

At last, in the most ungenial mood of the spring, before the teeming world of herbs and insects could make more than a cold, shy response to its ardent wooer, there arrived at the Shottery Cottage the little, gruff, reserved, grey rabbit of a *savant*, who had worked in the galleys, but now appeared in a new stock with a buckle, and cuffs reaching to his elbows. He received every thing like attention and honor as cavalierly as ever, and was not much more communicative on his present purposes and plans than on his old history.

But when Monsieur Landre was sitting with the Dupuys over his *café noir*, on the very afternoon of his arrival, he suddenly propounded a hair-brained scheme. The whole family at the Shottery Cottage, he proposed, should quit Sedge Pond, carrying their household gods with them. He advised that they should start with him for London, where he would get lodgings for them near his own, in Soho, and engagements in his manufactory, if they wished it. The great Mr. Bentley, he said, was partial to *émigrés* among his designers and colorists, and rewarded them liberally for their services, besides affording them the satisfaction of seeing a most ancient and honorable art restored to its merited ascendancy.

The Huguenots, in their time, had been well accustomed to hasty flights and unexpected exodus. That time was gone by now, however, and this movement seemed uncalled for, and in a great measure inexplicable. But Monsieur Landre would not be put past his proposal either by *gloria* or *coupeaux*, but stirred his cup vehemently, and poked out his head, showing, as he attempted to peer with his scorch-

ed contracted eyes into the face of Monsieur and Grand'mère, that he had adopted a pigtail.

Yolande first gaped incredulously, unable to realize the possibility of such a step, then turned round wistfully, and hung breathlessly on Grand'mère's reply.

Monsieur shrugged his shoulders, and cried, "Ta, ta, ta! Farce! The hangman! To France sooner."

But at this the pigtail only wagged more impetuously and imperiously, insisting, in dumb show, that there were weighty reasons for its possessor's startling words, and asking a more serious consideration of his invitation and a more decided answer to it.

Grand'mère looked at her son, as he stuck his thumbs, English-fashion, in his vest, and planted his feet firmly on the floor, smiling re-assurance at her, while at the same time he raised his eyebrows at the panic of poor Monsieur Landre, who had been rendered eccentric—*tête bleu!* quite unhinged—by his early adversity.

"My very good friend Landre, the geese will cackle—when have they not cackled? but, for the term of my life, I stir not from this delectable spot, where I have pitched my tent and planted my vine—in a figure, for, *ouf!* tents would have much cold here, and vines, alas! would not grow, unless in frames of glass."

"Monsieur, I have read in the classics—the Delphin classics—a long time ago, when I was a little boy, that one time the geese they cackled, and the people they heard and minded, and what happened? The Roman capitol was saved," continued Monsieur Landre, with marked emphasis.

"The *historiette*, in order to be well applied, has need of two things," criticised Monsieur, carelessly: "a capitol and a foe. That is what I say as a man, but the women may judge differently. For aught that I know they may be dying with the wish to see the town again. What say you, my mother?"

Grand'mère looked at Yolande, and caught the extreme reluctance, the piteous entreaty which spoke in the girl's eyes. To have gone up and seen the great town and the settlements of Huguenots there, would have been very well, and Yolande, girl-like, might have welcomed the novelty and the excitement; but it was a cruel shock to hear the talk of bidding good-bye, a long good-bye, to the home

where Yolande's heart had grown up, where it had gone out on its own venture, and where it had been met and driven back, and all but wrecked, by storms.

Grand'mère bent forward and took the empty cup from Monsieur Landre's hand, then took the hand itself, where the deep shadow of his cuff hid the weals worn and seared into his boyish flesh three-fourths of a century before. "A thousand thanks, my friend," she said, "but we will stay with our man here. It is not worth while that the women risk life by themselves. What can harm the child and me and Philippine—the daughter, the mother, the wife of Hubert? We go where Hubert goes, and dwell where he dwells. What would you, my old man? Is not that right."

The pigtail shook again, but more slowly, sadly this time. "*Si, si fait, Madame.*" Monsieur Landre acquiesced, as if in a looked-for, almost an inevitable defeat.

Yolande was not blind or deaf, or totally incurious and unalarmed, though she had not the experience of the others to forewarn her, and though she had been brought up in the total passiveness of a French girl. She had profited sufficiently by the inspiration of her Huguenot origin, her life on English soil, and the ties she had formed here, to have laid within her heart the foundation of principles of independence and energy. She was therefore shaken to the centre by the vaguest hint of evil to Grand'mère. Yolande, under pretext of presenting Monsieur Landre with the *petit verre* of a traveler, contrived, previous to his departure, which Monsieur was expediting as usual, to have an interview with the family friend. And Yolande tried, as far as a girl like her dared to try with a man who was not a member of her family, but who had been her friend and teacher, to get an explanation of his mission, just as she had sought enlightenment when his wary contradiction and reluctant qualification of her delight in the extravagant popularity of Grand'mère after the Sedge Pond sore throat had first vexed and disquieted her.

But Monsieur Landre, like the great majority of the French, believed a girl a notably unsuitable recipient of a secret of any kind, much more of an important and dangerous secret. Either this or the unutterable loathing with which he recoiled from expatiating on the frightful barbarities of

the galleys, had rendered him incorrigible in his reticence, and made him a man of mystery to the end. "There is nothing, my child, nothing." Monsieur Landre withdrew into himself as he took snuff, and assured Yolande that there was "nothing to which you could say *bien entendu*. All the world knows that we are Huguenots, and dwell among people who accord us shelter and a bounty—not always at the best market. But I do not pity myself, *tout-ça* and *tout-ça*, yet I have had more to pity myself for, word of Denis Landre! The English have been good to me, only it is necessary that we French and Huguenots hold together for the nation and the faith, even if we do not agree on other things. Your father will tell you that. So, Mademoiselle, if you have ever any desire to change your abode, to come to London and make a little money—and the girls of the *bourgeoisie* often have trades or serve as book-keepers to their fathers and uncles in France—you will find a friend in me. To be a silk-weaver in Languedoc or Dauphiné before the Revocation, and to be the same at Spitalfields or Norwich, is quite another thing. Therefore, if you come to have envy of my aid in London, *Misé*, here is my address, near to Soho. If you will come, I shall show you my garden on the roof, such as there is not another in London, and my menagerie, and you will become my little pupil again. Is it not so? And, *enfin*, I may have the honor of introducing you to the great Mr. Bentley."

Monsieur Landre left his address also with Grand'mère, of whom he took an elaborate farewell, going up for the purpose to her room, where, in her white embroidered cap and *peignoir*, she sat up in her great bed to receive him, while it was still the raw, chill early morning. Monsieur Landre kissed Grand'mère's hand, and Grand'mère kissed her old friend on both cheeks, "for all the world as if them two were ne'er to meet again here below," as Prie blurted out, while Deb began to rebuke her elder for the words the moment the two had retired to their kitchen.

"As bold as a hatchet, then," said Prie, wrathfully describing the liberty.

"What for could you ever go and say that, Prie?" remonstrated Deb, "and old Madame fourscore, and old Monsieur beatin' Methusalem? It is as like as blades o' grass that they'll never see one another alive again, Prie; but

how ever could you go and be so 'ard 'earted as even 'em to it?"

"'Ard 'earted to even an old man and 'ooman whose feet is a-treading on the brink of the grave, that mappen they're saying farewell to one another, and to right-down turmoil and misery for time, that they may be free to say good-day to dozens of friends of their youth, and to pure peace and blessedness, for eternity?" So Prie protested indignantly. "'Ard 'earted be it? But if ever an impudent swatch of a babby like you, Deb Pott, evens old Madam's friends to Methusalem, and old Madam hersen to being fourscore and not long for this world—what have you to do with that, a'd like to hear? And haven't you knowed and seed that the young go afore the old as often as not? If you say a word agin it, it is the back of the door you'll see yet, as sure as a've been christened Prie."

"Hoadley, do you observe any thing strange in the conduct of these parish gentry of ours to the family at the Shottery Cottage?" anxiously questioned the rector one day. "Manners are not what we may pride ourselves on at Sedge Pond. Though the people behave genteel enough to me, I confess I do not like the way in which they've begun once more to stare into the cottage windows and hang about the garden gate, as if they were taking observations of the foreigners. And the men, I notice, gather in knots after work hours, and one fellow harangues the rest, as if they had all a common grievance which he expounded to them. Does it strike you that there is any thing out of the common in the villagers' behavior—any thing dangerous? You know the Sedge Pondians are rough diamonds."

"No, sir; I have noticed nothing. Do the people meet, sir? May it not be to talk of some of the warnings and awakenings which they have had lately? I do believe some of them are savingly impressed."

"I hope so. There is room," responded the rector, briefly; "but I wish Mr. Lushington had not taken this time to go up to town to settle accounts with the family's new butler. He ought to be familiar with the signs of the place, and I should have liked to have heard his opinion," the rector reflected, as if he did not find his intended son-in-law very practical.

"I do not think there is the slightest fear of the villagers

being guilty of any thing so foolish and brutal as mischief to the Dupuys, who were very good to them in their need ; you surely forget, sir," the curate continued, to assure the rector, who shook his head.

Mr. Hoadley was essentially a man of few ideas. His first idea had been himself ; his second, what great things he should do for his Master and his fellow-men. He was not unkind nor ungrateful ; he was any thing but spiteful, for his own heart was satisfied, though his prospects were different from what he had pictured to himself. With all his graces, and the last best grace of Heaven among them, he was as incapable of wide apprehension and sympathy as his Mistress Milly.

The rector was older and wiser, but he still flattered himself, as on the occasion of the election (in spite of its lesson), that he could overawe and master his people—that he could chain and gag the wild beast in them, the wild beast which lurks in every mob. He had ridden in among his parishioners and quelled them when they were in the very open act of violence, ere now, and he had faith that he could do so again. Thus, by the heedlessness of one watchman and the pride of another, by the confidence of Grand'mère and the mingled craftiness and recklessness of Monsieur, chances were lost, and time passed until the fate which, in the great march of events, Providence held in store, was at hand.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE STORM BURST.

"My son, you must go," said Grand'mère, when the storm burst at last, and Monsieur was made aware, through some of his agents, that a warrant of State had been issued against him, and that an officer had been sent from London to apprehend him.

Monsieur had dabbled in intrigues all his life, and they came to him almost as naturally as silk-weaving. On the whole, they had been for Protestantism, in its aspect of political freedom, as he recognized it. The public acknowledgment of the rights of the Huguenots, and their restoration to their native land, were the ends he had had in

view; and for the promotion of these he desired the establishment and prosperity of the Whig party, and the confusion of the Tory. But it is hard to touch pitch and not be defiled. If Monsieur's personal interests intruded into and defiled his schemes, that is not, on the whole, surprising. If he introduced a little smuggling into his enterprises in silks, laces, and other commodities, and was in the habit of communicating such private information very impartially, either from France to England, or from England to France, as did not bear on his main projects, it was a course from which the philosophy of Rochefoucauld and St. Simon by no means excluded him. All honest, God-fearing men, however, called it public treachery—treachery, at once, to the country which had adopted him, and the country which had born him.

Monsieur, certainly not a coward by physical organization, had been rendered still more regardless by long immunity from punishment. Thus he had been led to deride Monsieur Landre's desperate attempt to win him, at the last moment, from the volcano on which he was standing. When the crisis came at last, and exposure and retribution stared him in the face, the middle-aged, double-minded, plausible Monsieur of Sedge Pond went, as he might have done forty years before when he had broken but a few branches in his father's vineyard, and confessed all to his mother. He poured into her true, tried ear the full tale of his sin and trouble, and waited for her counsel and commands with as full faith in her as though she had been a superior being, and in as entire submission to her will as if he still lived in the innocence of the past.

Grand'mère did not say to him that he might have thought of the long lessons, the tender yearnings, and the fervent prayers which she had bestowed on him throughout the labyrinth of his wanderings; nor did she say that he need not have lapsed so far from the spirit of these, to come to her at last for comfort after he had gone near to break her heart. She might chide, and she had often chidden, though she did not know how to rebuke her devoted son sharply. But to reproach him, to make the bitterness of his fall more bitter to him, was not in Grand'mère. On the contrary, God's pity for Hubert was to be reflected in his mother's face. It was to be the most loving considera-

tion for his suffering, and the most anxious summoning up of all her energies for the lightening of his burden. His escape must be contrived, justice too must be satisfied, but there was no law, human or divine, that required Monsieur's old mother to give him up to the State which he had offended.

Happily, from Monsieur's early training as a scout, his business connection, and his familiarity with more or less unauthorized modes of transport, his escape, so soon as he should be beyond the immediate neighborhood, became, comparatively, a practicable matter even to trembling women.

"But I go to-night, that is certain, and how will you be ready, my old woman?" asked Monsieur, careful of his mother as ever; "or shall I risk waiting at Yarmouth or Harwich, so that you can follow with the delay which is necessary for your years? No, that will not do. I can not fix on either port till I am on the way, and have heard more news by the first post. I may have to change my route altogether, and, after all, I do not think I could trust you alone on the road. Nay, my good mother, the jockeys would shake your grey head off with the jolting. The English dogs' weather would freeze you to the coach seat or the pillion. Ah! that will be all remedied when we get to the Carolinas in America—that refuge of the Huguenots. But for the present, what shall we do, *ma mère*?"

"I shall remain here, my son; I am too old a horse to travel," replied Grand'mère, with a sickly smile. "A new half of the globe is more than half a world farther off than the little chamber of the grave to a woman of fourscore who has seen nearly all her contemporaries housed before her. No, I say not that—I eat my words; but I can not encumber your retreat. Go, Hubert, make a new home across the great waves of the Atlantic among the colony of our people in the Carolinas; and if there is still breath in this rag of a body, I shall go to you, my *garçon*; but I can not accompany you—it is impossible, you must see it."

"*Peste!* it is more impossible for me to abandon you," persisted Monsieur, with the swollen veins of a mortal struggle rising on his forehead. Here was his Nemesis, or was it his God in controversy with him? Every Huguenot knew the saying of Agrippa D'Aubigné to Henry of Navarre when the incorruptible Protestant saw the wound in the lip which the renouncer of Protestantism had sustained

from an assassin's dagger : " Sire, hitherto you have denied God with your lips, and God has been contented with piercing your lips ; but when you shall deny Him with your heart, then shall God pierce your heart."

Were God's arrows now indeed in Monsieur's heart ? His mother had never ceased to be the pride of his heart, the apple of his eye.

" You abandon me not, my son ; I stay by my own choice—that is to say, by my own judgment and God's will. I can not do more than is possible for me. I stay only till better days come, when, if I am not gone where you will follow, Hubert, you will reclaim me."

" But they will revenge themselves on you, little mother," cried Monsieur, with tears as he rose up. " Alas ! they will visit my offenses on my mother, and I must save myself from that extremity of wickedness and misery. A thousand times rather I would stay and brave all. What are their prisons, their Old Baileys, their Tyburns, when it comes to her cherished head ?"

" You must not stay, my son. You must have care for your mother's heart as well as her head. I will not have you to stay, I have said it. And you are not reasonable, Hubert, my poor old *gars*. The English Government is just, is honorable, is merciful for that. You have abused its indulgence—alas ! it is true, I can not deny it—but it would scorn so poor a prey as an old woman in her son's stead. The English Government will not touch me, and I shall not be left alone ; I shall have Yolande and Philippine, and the good girls, Prie and Deb, to bear me company : *Tiens !* we will be—no, not merry as grigs, that may not be, but safe as bats."

" I shall go or stay as you and my father wish it, Grand'mère," submitted Yolande, with a great gulp of terror and distress, recalling now with consternation and remorse how she had thought and looked when the question had been of the whole Huguenot family turning their backs on Sedge Pond for London.

" Of course, *petite*, you will do as you ought," Monsieur accepted Yolande's offer with something that sounded like supreme indifference after what had gone before it. " But how with my wife ?"

" For me, I go with my husband," declared Madame

with some severity, taking every body by surprise, though in reality nothing could be plainer or more likely than her behavior when her friends had time to reflect on it. It was Madame's duty as a wife, and Madame had always been devoured with a desire to do her duty, as she reckoned it. She believed she would have gone into the *aigues mortes*, have suffered a dragonnade in her own person, sooner than knowingly fail in her duty. She had almost longed for the test, she had half envied the persecutions of the Huguenots before her. She had taken so little interest in the country where her lot for many years had been cast, that she did not altogether comprehend wherein lay the difference between Monsieur's tribulation and the old woes of the faithful. She did not give him entire credit for being persecuted for righteousness's sake ; she had too keen an appreciation of him as a man of the world for that. She judged that the strait was occasioned by some question belonging to the Huguenot alliance with perfidious England ; but undoubtedly Monsieur had risen in Madame's estimation by having come under the grasp of the law of the land, and she prepared with gloomy zest and dignity to share his risks and hardship.

Monsieur had always been bourgeois enough to pay scrupulous respect to the rights of his wife, and he agreed to Madame's will with that indefinable mixture of complacence and imperturbability which marked him in all his relations with her. He might be painfully, even dangerously cumbered by Madame's journeying with him, or he might be in urgent need of a woman's cares in the personal details and domestic management for which he had all his life depended on women. It was hard to tell. There remains only to record that Madame decided to depart with him, and Madame had a clear title to dispose of herself as she wished. Monsieur bowed over the bony hand ready to be put in his, and there was no more to be said.

At the height of the Huguenot movement and the Huguenot trials, the sudden breaking up of households had been a common occurrence, and partings of members of families for indefinite periods to enter on new and untried phases of life the normal experience of the people. Grand'mère had known these days, but she had been separated from them by a great interval of years and events. In spite

of her cares and fears, she had not expected to know them again, and however they might come to her daughter-in-law, they came to her with the dismal odds between suffering for conscience's sake and suffering for wrong-doing. When the feet totter and the hands tremble, when the grasshopper becomes a burden to the weary heart and brain which cry out at their own distorted shadows, the effects of a social earthquake, tearing them from the supports to which they had clung, are very hard to bear. But Grand'mère bore every thing because it was for Hubert's sake, because it was her cross laid upon her by a truer, tenderer friend than Hubert.

It was a terrible sentence that came to Monsieur. Cutting off his right hand and plucking out his right eye would have been easier than what was demanded of him. It was like giving his heart from his bosom to resign his mother; and it was the fruit of his own devices, the bed he had made for himself.

"I have been a bad character, *ma mère*, in spite of every thing," he groaned aloud at the moment when he was to go from her—"a selfish wretch, a reckless villain."

"Not true, my son," she contradicted him; "but you will do one thing more for the love of the old woman," she pled, holding him fast. "You will believe in more than her when she is no longer with you, that you may love and trust still when she is gone from your sight, my friend—that we may hold communion together when our bodies are parted—ah! my child, that we may hold communion together forever."

"I will try, my mother—and you—you will pray for your faithless son."

And surely there is hope for such men as Monsieur when, with all their corruption, they retain in their right hand a jewel of the first water—filial tenderness, the reverence unsurpassed, all but unapproached, for weak womanhood in its holiest form of motherhood.

Madame broke down also, at the instant of action. She had spoken and read so much of persecutions that she had almost persuaded herself that she had been in the thick of them. She had learned to think of them as a crown of distinction and glory reserved for the salt of the earth, and quite endurable by her, at least. Madame lived to find, like

many another perfectly sincere Christian, that talking and doing are operations standing far enough apart from each other ; nay, that to do the first, however fast and with all the warmth in the world, is not the best preparation for the second.

“I am a furious *poltronne*,” cried the honest woman, “when it comes to leaving the corner of the fire. I recoil from it, have palpitations of the heart. I know not how I shall pass over the common roads, through the strange inns, by the *malhonnêtes gendarmes* of the ports, how I shall survive, even, the *mal de mer*, which a child of a traveler has to encounter. How it can be that before the turn of the clock I shall say, ‘*Adieu, adieu, petite mère*,’ ‘Until we meet again, Yolandette,’ ” wept Madame ; “*quoi?* I know nothing, I know not myself. I feel I should be afraid to remain, to be among women alone all the day, like a convent of nuns without the breastwork of the grating, in the middle of the *canaille*. Me, I can not tell now why I went not out into the midst of the village with Grand’mère and Yolande to nurse the sick when the sickness was here. Was it, in truth, hard apathy ?—or was it low skulking from the beggar of contagion ? *Allons*, I know not myself any longer, and from what I do know I despise and hate myself. To the Lutherans, the Catholics, the executioner—though I shall screech and struggle in his hands, I am certain of it—with this cheat and traitress of myself !”

“My true, my honorable Philippine,” Grand’mère consoled Madame with fond fervor, “thou wilt know thyself again better than ever ; and even if thou shouldst never know thyself again, there is One who knows thee and judges righteous, yes, merciful judgment.”

Thus it happened that on one of those reluctant, sullen spring evenings, when the twilight seemed to scowl and hide its face from the drooping buds, which withered before their time, Monsieur handed out Madame, and waved his hat to make up for neglecting to kiss his hand to the remaining inmates of the cottage, who did not venture to follow the couple farther than the door—the sight sending a jealous hue and cry through Sedge Pond. The travelers carried only a few packages, as if they were going no farther than Reedham, or at the most Norwich, on a rare bit of pleasure. They did not set out in the great mail-

coach, which, whether it went or came, carried always with it a strong flavor of London and London news, but in a post-chaise, the grandeur of which was a parting offense and insult to the villagers. Nobody dreamed of riding post below the rank of the rector and his lady. Even young Parson and Madam Hoadley would be counted mad should they pretend to any such fine doings when they were "buckled." The houseful of women, old and young, was left, as Madame had said, without even the barrier, long impregnable, of the *grille*, on the hostile soil of Sedge Pond, where enmity had resisted so many friendly overtures that it might be considered to have prevailed, and to be flourishing pure and undefiled.

Within less than a week after this event, the metropolitan officer who had Monsieur for his object, arrived at Sedge Pond, traveling post in his turn. He brought the great hue and cry to the villagers' itching ears, that Monsieur Dupuy, who had dwelt so long among them, making a handle of the little village on the great road, had been an offender and impostor all along, a paid agent of their natural foes across the channel, transmitting the intelligence which their coach became a vehicle to carry. When men could be hanged for a single act of smuggling, and when strings of men had been lodged in Dover and York Castles, and brought out and executed in batches for being mixed up in small risings and riotings under a paternal government, Monsieur seemed to deserve not simply to be hanged, but to be quartered, and every creature belonging to him to be hooted and hounded as sinks and snares, out of decent villagers' company.

Not to say that the officer proceeded on those bloody-minded principles. He was a man of the abounding good-humor which flows from one who is at once pompous and boisterous. He ruffled it a little like a justice, stared at Yolande, but was reasonably civil to Grand'mère. He ate what was set before him with wonderful condescension, and, as if that were not enough honor, cast sheep's eyes upon some of Grand'mère's treasures, and threw out broad hints for them. Finally, he carried away, as a triumphant tribute to his rendering himself agreeable to the ladies, an antique carved *flacon*, and a *timbale en vermeil*, which he was so good as to call two outlandish Toby Fillpots. He had made an

examination of the premises previously, and had not been very particular after he had discovered traces on the hearth in Monsieur's cabinet of an extensive conflagration of papers. He took himself off without farther delay or injury, but unquestionably he cared not at all that he left Sedge Pond behind him in a ferment.

In the ale-house gossip the Royal Bounty to the French intruders rose rapidly from fifteen to fifty thousand, and then up to a million, all wrung from the sweat of the brow of overtired, abused native subjects. And yet Mounseer, not content with ruining the credit of the army and the navy in countless battles past, present, and to come, was guilty of false charges on illicit information—how obtained, or for what purpose, nobody paused to ascertain—against every individual, great and small, in Sedge Pond. And the effect of all was that at last the presence of even a dog belonging to the Dupuys at the Shottery Cottage was looked upon as a monstrous affront and scandal.

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### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### SCAPE-GOATS.

GRAND'MÈRE and Yolande were profoundly ignorant of the state of public feeling at Sedge Pond. Grief swallowed up apprehension. The two women had kept close within doors since the revelation of Monsieur's delinquency, and were waiting and watching intently for tidings of the fugitives.

Deb was the herald of the villagers' malice. "If so be you be able to bear it, old Madam—you do be the only Madam as is left to us—don'tee miss Madam proper's rare laments on we and the wicked world? Her bark were worse than her bite, it were; and the house do be main dull and dozened without her melancholic ditties; sure she would have enjoyed a stramash, and her up to the mast-head on't, to cry, 'Come on.' But a' div think us ought to tell 'ee, old Madam—you do be old," Deb went off again, frank as she was, fain to beat about the bush; "though big Prie dared me to even the likes of 'ee to hoary heads, and though there been't a younger Madam here-away now. For that matter,

Madam as were here weren't young, were of the kind that ain't ever young, like a plant of southernwood. Prie and me, we be pintered at, and cried to, and fouled with dirt, whenever we enters the street."

"Chickens will be chickens, and children children, my best Deb," answered Grand'mère, composedly. "*Hein !* wert thou not a child once, thy wise self?"

"There been't no childer in the business. There be men with slouching shoulders, and beards on their chins, as wern't never childer in my time. One of them shied a stone into the garden gate, last time a' passed, as had brained a child, and been its monument forby. It was the same man as taunted Prie with being refugees' spawn, sold to the Devil, and showing the cloven hoof for a sign. A' mun at no price go out into the street, nor you, Madam, nor Ma'mselle, till the ill blood be spilt."

"I go out this afternoon, Deb ; I go where I have gone before. I wish to ask for the little child who has the fractured limbs, and for the old woman who has the cramps. I crave pardon for not having asked before these days ; I have been very selfish. Yolande carries the *tisane bienvenue !* The men know us well ; they have been rejoiced to see us ere now ; they will call no names to us, but have shame, compunction. Behold all!"

The men had some shame: they drew back and shrank out of sight when the old woman sallied out among them, with no armor but the benefits she had rendered to them, and the good-will she bore them. But Grand'mère found every door once more shut in her face by hands which had been stretched out to her in their extremity—hands that she had grasped ; while blood-shot eyes, which had looked into her dove-grey eyes with an agony of appeal, and had not looked in vain, now covertly watched her rejection without a sign of relenting.

Discomfited, Grand'mère returned home, curbing her indignation, and resolutely resisting the dread and sinking of the heart which stole over her. She only looked wistfully in Yolande's face, and whispered, "They will know us better some day, *pauvrette* ; it is we who are poor miserables to-day—but they will live to know us better—at last."

That night stones were thrown, and not at the garden gate alone. A volley rattled against the diamond-shaped

windows of the cottage, and shivered them; and toward dusk an instalment of a disorderly mob which had collected, kindled a bonfire in the street, in dangerous proximity to the thatch roofs, and not a hundred yards from the gable of the Shottery Cottage. In the childishness of folly and violence, the men shouted and gesticulated round it, and ended by giving a display of small puppets, hastily manufactured of straw and rags, and having a far-fetched resemblance to a man and several women, arrayed in cloaks, hats, hoods, jackets, and caps. These rude symbols were persistently jerked and danced with frantic fervor in the light of the flames which flashed on the broken windows, until, with oaths and cries, they were hustled and flung into the heart of the fire, which consumed them forthwith.

Grand'mère acted like a *vraie châtelaine*—with spirit and sense. She allowed no lights within doors, and made the shutters fast, to exclude as far as possible the light without. But she would not hear Prie's dry suggestion: "There be oceans of hot water, Madam, in the great kettle, so be they come underneath the wall, a-clambering to the winders. And the wench Deb, she be right-down confident that she could fire Mounseer's fowling-piece, as would send a bird-shot or two into the faces of the ringleaders."

Notwithstanding, there was no sleep for the household of the Shottery Cottage that night, as they sat with nerves on the stretch. Small spurts of rage and valor came and went, but soon waned for want of expression. And it was with the increasing fear of beings defenseless and timid by nature, that they waited and prayed for the ashy grey of the spring morning.

Long before morning, both fire and mob died away. But it was peculiar to the slow, stealthy, brooding village nature, that its blind wrath rose and fell and rose again, and that there was no security in its temporary lull, for it always returned to the charge, and step by step advanced to its end. The rector had some knowledge of this characteristic of the villagers. He went himself to the Shottery Cottage, early on the following day, for the first time since he had received the account of Monsieur's true character and flight. His purpose was to request Grand'mère on no account to attempt to cross the threshold, or to suffer any of her family to go out till he gave her leave. At the same time he wish-

ed to comfort her with the assurance that, if the village really rose and threatened to molest her, he would be on the spot to put an end to the proceedings without so much as a necessity of reading the Riot Act.

By noon the village was re-enforced by stragglers who had gone to their work in the morning and had come home for dinner. They brought with them country recruits mad with the information of the mighty favors which had been lavished on foreigners by a false government, and the poor return which had been paid for it, as proved by the base betrayal of Sedge Pond by the Dupuy family. The population in the neighborhood was not strictly agricultural. It included an unsettled, semi-lawless class, some of whom were engaged as goose-herds, and others as snipe-shooters and cockle-gatherers from the coasts. They formed fit audience for such a rumor, and were well calculated to improve the occasion of its delivery.

When the shadows began to lengthen, the village and its allies rose, and presented a ragged regiment of smock-frocks and soiled caps. Their hearts were filled with black envy and rancor, their fists were equal to hammers, and there were bludgeons bristling here and there, more than enough to cow and scatter like small dust the frail troop of women opposed to them, even though every woman had possessed the bones and sinews of young Deb Potts.

In the ragged regiment, there were women, too, who wore red cloaks, or were in their house attire. They were stolid and sullen, or light-headed and giddy slatterns, who had come out to egg on the men.

The Shottery Cottage was in a state of siege. There was no longer room to doubt the fact, and the malice of the besiegers was momentarily growing, like the surge and swell of the sea in a storm.

The rector arrived to redeem his pledge, and addressed the people in the tone of an undaunted, indignant gentleman:—"My men, what do you mean by this un-English work? Are you aware that you are simply molesting a houseful of women—ladies, my friends, and their servants? If you have any grudge against Monsieur—he is a single man, still he is a man—wait till he turn up, and then settle it with him lawfully; but don't bully women, else I'll think you a greater set of curs than I took you for. Come, you

rascals, disperse, and have done with this ugly mockery, or it will be the worse for you."

To the rector's dismay, his remonstrance and sharp reprimand produced no effect, except in the way of calling forth dogged growls, squaring of backs, setting shoulder to shoulder, and at last a low roar of recrimination—"Have done yoursen, Pearson. Mind your own business—this here be none of yourn. You be took in yoursen, with the rest of the gentry, by the French scum. Remember your darter, good young Mr. Hoadley's wife as is to be, and how nigh hand she were debauched by the slyboots here, as quiet as a May puddock, with her charity and her religion. Go home, and be thankful that your lass has escaped, and let us a-be to root out the nest of hornets, and save our lasses."

It was to no purpose that Mr. Philip Rolle kept his ground—nay, forced his person into the closely-wedged mass—that he singled out individuals to call them by name, and abated his dignity to shout and threaten in his turn. He was under the disadvantage of not towering on horseback, having neither riding-whip nor spurs to cleave the ranks, and lash and stamp down resistance. He had not the Riot Act in his pocket to pull out and read, summoning the people, under the pains and penalties of the law, to break up and withdraw to their own homes. And even although he had possessed both aids, the tide by this time was running too strong against him. All the weight of his cloth, character, and family only served to protect his own head from the passion and prejudice of the people.

The rector was the one man in the crowd to give in—and it was for the first time in his life. He retreated to the rectory, but it was to lose no time. In grief and horror he recalled that there was no justice nearer than young Gage of the Mall. He quickly resolved to mount his old hunter, My Lady, and gallop to the Mall, to secure the squire's concurrence. Then from the Mall he would ride to Reedham, to see if there was a corps of yeomanry on drill at the market-town, and to beg the chief magistrate and the commanding officer to give him the support he required. He knew that it would be night-fall before he could bring a regular force to Sedge Pond, relieve Grand'mère, and put down the riot. But he was not a man to

succumb to despair in the shape of difficulties, or to leave a stone unturned when there were deeds to accomplish. He calculated on the wholesome effect of the honest light of day, and expected that no over-act of violence greater than the insults of last night would be committed without repeated adjournments to the ale-house. He might be in time after all.

In the meanwhile he dispatched another message to Grand'mère, giving special instructions to the messenger that he should procure admission to the cottage, and re-assure the poor Frenchwomen by informing them of his plans. The messenger was Black Jasper, and he attained his object. Massa's imperative orders, and the irritating treatment which he himself received from many of his ordinary acquaintance in his progress, urged him on. For the rabble of Sedge Pond were in that fitful, excitable, and exacting humor when small provocation was needed to raise their gorges. Black Jasper's color, coupled with some inkling of his errand, which they were not so far gone in their work as to stop, was the grievance in this case.

"Another strange crow—a black beetle who mappen had his venom, like the rest of them, for all his pretended softness. He had been mortal quick in taking up with the cottage cattle, and had run at the beck of the old witch every time he had seed her, as gin she had been Pearson's son. To the wall with the grinning blackamoor—whack him out of the village after his friend Mounseer!"

Black Jasper entered the Shottery Cottage in a bath of sweat, and his woolly hair on end in mingled fury and fear. It was clear that he must perforce remain, the only man garrisoning the cottage. He could not face a return to the rectory, even to obey Massa.

The rector heard of this detention as he was mounting his horse, and had to quiet Madam and his daughters as he best could; for Mr. Hoadley chanced to be at the other end of the parish, whither he had been summoned to attend a death-bed. The rector told himself that it was well, for he would never be able to convince Mr. Hoadley that the assembly was not a congregation got together without any exertion, and to which he would declaim till the yells of the mob drowned his text and murder was committed. The Huguenot women would not be much the stronger for

Jasper's manhood, but the fellow was Philip's fellow, and as blindly faithful as any dumb animal. He had obeyed his master at least. But what if Philip's Jasper, one of the few relics of his young captain, came to grief! The rector dashed off at the thought more like a dragoon than a black-coat, setting his teeth to keep down his emotion.

Nothing worse happened as yet, but even that was ominous. The lounging, grumbling men suddenly shook themselves up, took the garden gate off its hinges, and poured into the garden with a wild whoop. They then set themselves to all manner of mischief about the pond, the bower, and the small miniature alleys and *oseraie*, as if that were all their purpose. This, however, might serve to detain them opportunely till other than moral force was brought to bear upon them; for Monsieur, in pursuance of his own game, had taken care that the Shottery Cottage had massive shutters and strong bolts and bars. So if its occupants would only sit like hares on their form, it could offer as good passive resistance to attack as places of far greater importance.

But the performance of the Sedge Pond villagers was not in itself cheering as beheld by the owners of the garden. The bleak spring weather had taken a turn for the better that day; the wind had veered from north-east to south-west, and, blowing softly, was wooing a hundred unsuspected allies—bud and leaflet, and little wakeful tomtit and willow-wren and field-mouse—to come forth and show themselves. It was such a sweet, hopeful spring day as might make an old woman young again, and such had made Grand'mère young when she had gone abroad and cried out with joy at the sight of the first jonquille and violet, and had sat in the arbor, framed by the periwinkle and ivy, and held the interview with Lady Rolle. The cold, blue-grey periwinkle flowers were in blossom again, and hands, the grime of which Grand'mère had ever respected, were rudely tearing down greenery and frame-work, while ruthless feet were trampling willfully among the plants of the strange little colony of caraway, endive, and chicory with which the emigrants had tried to cheat themselves into the belief that their garden was a French garden.

Yolande, peeping sorrowfully out, and witnessing the havoc, was engrossed by it, the more so that in her igno-

rance she did not feel much fear, till Grand'mère recalled her. Grand'mère had seen such ruin, and worse, of which this apprentice job was but the precursor. But she did not wish to see it again. Besides, she had work to do; and Grand'mère's spirit had flashed up to meet the occasion. She moved about in the darkened house as nimble as a girl. She gathered round her in the parlor, under one pretense or another, the whole camp—and how small it looked! Staid, surly Prie tossed her head a little, as she had done when Mr. George from the castle ran away with Ma'mselle. Deb Potts, no more than stimulated by the skirmishing she had engaged in, was eager to seize the rolling-pin or the tongs from the stove, in lieu of Monsieur's fowling-piece, which she was forbidden to handle. Black Jasper—not so much tossing his head like Prie, as staggering unsteadily under the influence of a kind of Dutch courage which kept him up in the mean time—was the most hysterical of the household. Last of all, Yolande stood sad and scornful, for she was at the age when principles are lofty, and faith in human kind has a dash of splendor, in contemplation of jealous misunderstanding, vile ingratitude, and dastardly outrage.

Grand'mère took her cue, and began to speak of her own old experience—the experience of her sect and nation in wrong and suffering, which Madame her daughter-in-law had so loved to record. She told how Madame de la Force, of the *haute noblesse*, had been shut up for years in a common prison sooner than renounce her creed; how carefully-nurtured young girls of the *bourgeoisie* had lain festering in the hold of a slave-ship bound for the Barbadoes, when a word would have set them free, and restored them to their country and their friends; how Judith Maingault, who had been among the first Huguenot settlers in America, had subsisted six months without bread, enduring hardships under which strong men had fainted and fallen. Most of the company had often before heard the stories, but to a different accompaniment. They had a new meaning from Grand'mère's lips at this season. They caused the shouts of contumely ringing round the Shottery Cottage to sink into a confused murmur, or to change into something like plaudits, when Grand'mère wound up her narrative with the words—

“ Yes, my children, we want an evangel for scenes like these, and folk like these, more than we want one that will

take in the persecutors. If a philosophy can be found to serve the *spirituelle* and the gracious, let them keep it. I believe not in it ; but that goes for nothing. What it is that I want is an evangel for one and all—silly, rude, hardened, gross, cruel ; for, see you, though they kill me, I am not so unlike them—not so blameless, noble, sage, tender—that I can not claim kindred with the offenders, that I can not call to mind offenses of mine which I have committed in my day, little brothers and sisters of their offenses."

" Well-a-day, then, us wants such an evangel a power more than you do, Madame," chimed in Deb Potts in the name of the convicted listeners.

The afternoon was wearing on. Longer shadows were barring the pure, sweet light falling so strangely on the big men transformed into senseless, reckless children, and invested with a power which they abused to work mischief. The question was whether the *emeute* would exhaust itself in the trifling demonstration, or whether the taste for destruction, like the taste for blood, would increase with indulgence. There was one of those pauses of hesitation or debate with better and manlier instincts which had characterized the tumult all along ; and the household thus marked out and tormented, as they looked and saw the wasted spring-garden half deserted, began to lift up their heads and think their trial was past. But when a fresh band of smock-frocks and towering faces hurried in on the little green stage before the cottage, and a hoarser, more brutal shout than any which had yet been raised, called for the old witch—

" We want the old witch as bewitches all who come near her, Pearson, and Pearson's daughter, and Deb Potts. Han't Deb hersen said 'twere witchcraft, and her good mother bade her ware of it, afore her were taken, and Deb were sold under the spell ? We will be bewitched next oursens ; there will be ill among our beasteses ; there be't already. Jack Bar's cow had a turn hinder night. Sam Hart's colt flung in stable and broke his grey mare's leg. Lance Gill's gander thrust his neck into a cranny on Cliff-beck and were strangled. Let us see whether the old witch will pretend to cure them. We wunnot abide no more of her doings ; we will have her, and her stick with her, and see whether her will sink or swim, that will we—"

Yolande threw herself before Grand'mère, and aghast with impotent anger and terror clung to her, determined that she herself should be seized first, and that nothing should separate the two.

Prie muttered, "They do be in a frenzy," and stared transfixed. Black Jasper gave a great womanish sob, and Deb came forward towering in her height, purple with passion, her teeth set desperately, "A'se go out to them, madam, and eat my words. Dear heart, a' wull. A'se not be forbidden, though they catch and duck me ower and ower. An ill tongue suld be torn out by the roots, Scriptur do say; and a' had an ill tongue that day, but a' knowed no better, as mother knowed no better. The Lord he do have forgiven her for her ignorance, so you'll forgive me, old Madam, and a'se bear my punishment. Nay, now, it been't by a heap so bad to go out and say, 'You raging tykes, as fact as death a' leed yon time, a tell-ed a clean idle lie, that you, Ma'mselle, as took me in out of the sickness, and took care o' me, and made a 'oman of me, which mother owned with her last breath, and Prie that bore with me, and even this blubbering, engrained thing of a man, should go for to think a' were a beast goin' back to my beastesness, to stand and hear my own wicked words raked up agin you, and not to go out and cast them in the bilities' teeth, and gasp out round denials of them, were vil-lagers to ram the denials down the throat o' me."

"Softly, softly," said Grand'mère, in her paleness, seeking to calm Deb. "No, my girl, you shall not go. Nobody will put herself in peril for me. I say it, and I have been accustomed to be obeyed all my life. Ah me, there are few left to obey me, but you are one of the few, my Debtoire, and you will not stir a finger to disabuse the marauders. What will you, when they accuse even a poor stick like Madame Rougeole—the poor, dear Madame, who won her name by the little children's beds, and with whom they were wont to play? But names are not stones, *fille*, they break no bones. For that matter, the revilings and the caresses are alike in this respect, that one must bestow them, and one must receive them, while the world lasts. 'There is one who kisses, and one who extends the cheek.' Is it not so?"

Deb was forced to submit, but she was discontented and restless, while whistles and vociferated demands for the

old witch continued to sound under the very window. In her discomfiture she flew up, fell upon Black Jasper, and snubbed him severely for his disconsolate wail, and the prostration it implied :

“Gin ye do not give ower that bellerung, as is making of my head split, my black babby, that we ’omen be to stand round and fight for, a’se be rid of that, at least, for a’se march ye out of the outer door straight.”

“Oh, mercy, Miss Deb! I can not help it,” protested Black Jasper, wild with a new panic, “no more than you can help your bad words. Forgive me, Miss Deb, that I take the liberty of mentioning them, since you mentioned them fust yourself, and Black Jasper allers follows where the ladies leads. I ain’t a-funning now, Miss Deb, I give my word of honor; and I dunnot know a bit what I’m doing for the clatter of that crew. Them tears aire in my consti-tootion, I s’pose. They will come—allers, and the giggling amongst with them; though I han’t much to laugh at, lawks! you knows that as well as I, ’cept it be that my own massa is gone home before me, and p’r’aps he sees that I am here for obeying of his massa; and so he stoop down and say, as he used to speak cheerily afore the furious, bloody battles, ‘Courage, Jasper. Why, you oughtn’t to have been a boy at all, but a girl; you aire so chicken-hearted. Still we know who is true and kind, eh, lad? It will all be over soon, and the day is ours.’ Cap’n Philip may stoop to say that when they’re tearing down the house about our ears; and then I’ll hold my puffing and panting, though my liver is white, as the whole rectory kitchen says—queer that, Miss Deb, when the rest of me is black. I’ll stretch a pint and make out to answer, ‘Look here, Cap’n Philip: though I was chicken-hearted, I han’t ever failed you, have I? or your massa, or the old lady, not when I could sarve you. So you go quick, Cap’n Philip, and report me to the Gen’r'l. I’ll be precious spent with the fit, Miss Deb, if I don’t make out to say that much.”

“*Tout doucement*,” Grand’mère, who had been silent and thoughtful, had to say again. “It is necessary that a house be not divided against itself either in peace or in war. *Voilà* you had your own faults to answer for a few minutes ago, my brave Deb. Leave the boy alone. And you, my gay, who were the willing, quaking messenger of Monsieur the

Pastor, who does not know what the quakes say ? Go ! I have another balm for your woes and your quarrels, though I am not a witch. On the contrary, I have read this in my Bible ; and since it is for reading my Bible that I am in this England, it is good that I remember its least little lesson. Not true ? After a great saint and apostle, Paul, with his fellow-voyagers, had been exceedingly tossed by a tempest during many days, he besought his companions that they should take meat, assuring them that not a hair should fall from the head of any one of them. Let us also break bread and hope in God. But you are young, my children and I am old—old even by comparison with Big Prie ; for I was an anxious woman when she lay smiling in her cradle. There is one advantage which the grey-headed can claim—they have fasted from so many things in their lives, that their sluggish blood and feeble pulses need less renewing than the swift stream in the throbbing veins which nourish the black and brown heads that are still erect and stately. *Hein*, Prie, think of something more available than the madness of the world. Return thanks for your *pot-à-feu*, my fine woman, when your wits and all in the *cuisine* have gone a wool-gathering. I shall watch a little longer herè while the rest of the troop, every one, and Yolande, the first in order, show the example, and go to the kitchen at the back of the house, out of the sound of the din, and sup the *bouillon* as so many hungry children. I will have it so. I have told you I am always obeyed, and nobody is to begin contradicting me now. What can happen to me ? You are all within hearing. I do not dote ; I am not infirm ; but a capable old woman of my years, the good God be praised for it ! I will not be watched or guarded. Chut ! It is not polite—it is an intrusion, when you know as well as I that the blessed oaken shutters would keep out a cannon-ball. Leave me to my own thoughts ; they and I are not so ill-acquainted that I should feel shy of being left alone with them."

But eager as Grand'mère showed herself to dismiss her circle for rest and refreshment, however slight, she had a special word to say to each in the act. "My Lame," she detained Prie a moment, "often have you served the *bouillon* for me ; you would have gone hungry yourself, *mille fois*, that it might be strong and rich for me, as I taught

you to make it, and the *omelettes en chemise*, and the *frottement* and the *cirage* of the floors ; I taught you them all. *Oh, ciel !* they were happy lessons these, and one of them will refresh your own heart to-day, and you will live long yet to refresh others. Why, Prie, you are a young girl to me, and I shall leave you in charge of Yolande one of these days.—My Deb”—Grand’mère caught up the remorseful Deb—“my Deb with the tongue—it is a savage beast, that tongue, which no man can tame. Nevertheless, the fear of God in a good heart will tame it.—My boy, fear must not master us, for whether white or black, we have one Master, even Christ, so it is we who ought to master fear; whether it be a sin or a weakness, for He carries both our transgressions and our infirmities.—Yolandette,” Grand’mère turned wistfully, “you do not grudge that you have let father and mother go unhurt and stayed with me, to meet the retribution ? Grudge it never, *petite*—take it for your consolation. It is nearly over now.”

Left alone, Grand’mère remained perfectly still for a few moments, with nothing save her lips moving. Then she began to peep out into the garden and to listen, as she herself would have said, like a lynx, with her head turned toward the back of the cottage and the kitchen. At last she heard the sound she waited for. She got up quietly, and took Madame Rougeole. “They shall have the old witch, Madame and all,” she said to herself. “Madame Rougeole was my mother’s. These carved, red-headed sticks were the fashion in her province. Madame Rougeole, in her little coral dress, has been in our family for generations. But the people will not be defrauded of her that the children may go free—they would not long go free otherwise. I spied a ladder and an axe deposited at the corner of the house. My old eyes are quick to discern such tools; and they may well be so, for they early learned the look of them, and we return always to our first fear as to our first love. It is better that Madame Rougeole should go with me, for if it come to the worst, the sight of her would only torture Yolandette’s poor broken heart. My God, bind up this broken heart; bid these stones rise up and be friends to her; be Thou her friend, and she will want no other.”

Grand’mère was making her preparations all the time

that she thus murmured to herself and to her God. When they were finished, she stole past the passage which led to the kitchen, and by the withdrawal of a bolt, slipped out into a small out-building attached to the cottage. In it she found an old duffle cloak belonging to Prie, and, on the spur of the moment, put it on, hood and all. It was much too large for her, and she had to gather it round her, and hold it up like a beggar in a cast garment that had not been made to fit her. But for that reason it was the more appropriate for her purpose, and muffled her more completely. There was no back entrance from the street, back entrances being among the superfluities of the age. She must make her way out by the one little yawning gate-way from the garden, if she was determined to break the rector's prohibition. She did mean this, and she had availed herself of the moment when the foes were clustered like bees in the porch, those who remained without being stragglers engaged in putting the last touch to the demolition of the young plum and peach trees already powdered with blossom. If she moved quickly in the shadow of the wall, and did not stop for breath, or falter and look back, she might slip out when all heads were turned in an opposite direction, and get fused and melted among other grey cloaks worn by hangers-on on the outskirts in the village streets.

The brave old woman accomplished her end, and found herself, unsuspected, among the motley smock-frocks, tattered aprons, and disreputable false sailors' jackets. What refuge should she aim at? The rectory? It was at the other end of the village, and she could not hope to pass so far without being remarked upon, accosted, and detected. And she would carry a fire-brand to the rectory in the absence of its master, while she would be leaving so many sheep—her own sheep—among the wolves. Nay, she had not quitted her own household in ruins to carry ruin to another; she had not deceived her people and Yolande, and broken faith with them, for such an end. She had not so learned motherhood, Huguenotism, and Christianity. She made for the ale-house itself.

“If I give myself up,” Grand’mère reasoned, “the villagers will spare my child and my servants. At least there will be delay; and the pastor will return with forces in time to save them. If I give myself up, the villagers may

relent, and think what have I done to make them hate me so. If not, it is but the pouring out of the last drop of a mortal life from which the flavor is gone, since my son was compelled to leave me. And it is to ransom my darling, though it break her tender heart to begin with."

Happily Grand'mère knew thoroughly every step of the littered way, every bend that it took past sluttish sodden cottages, every ascent to manure heaps, and descent to draw-wells; her old feet could have trodden it comfortably had she been blindfolded. The hubbub and confusion of the unusual concourse were in her favor, for while on any ordinary occasion she could not have traversed the same distance on a spring afternoon without being remarked as a stranger in her old cloak, as it was, she was sufficiently mistress of herself to abstain from any act in flagrant discord with her general appearance. She took a circuit of Deb Potts's mother's house, and other hovels where she had fought the Sedge Pond sore throat, and at length arrived opposite the overgrown blooming red-brick building, with every avenue thrown wide open. Skittle-ground, bowling-green, and cockpit were deserted on this day, with its first promise of summer. The objects to be seen at the end of the outlets were sloppy tables, surrounded with lolling, loud-tongued men, scarcely less hot, and consumed by their own heat, than the great blazing fires which lighted up each brown room, and flickered fantastically on the faces of each company of besotted conspirators.

Grand'mère was looking about for a side door by which she had entered when she had on a former occasion visited the ale-house. She stood still, for the first time doubtful where to go, but not without taking the precaution to draw herself away into the shelter of the beech hedge of the forsaken skittle-ground, when a hand was laid on her cloak from behind.

She gave a great start at the arresting touch, followed by a greater start, and then an audible *miséricorde*; but there was none to hear her save the arrester.

It was Yolande, who, quick to penetrate Grand'mère's plot, had run at her kinswoman's heels with only the dark skirt of her gown drawn over her head to hide her identity. Grave and pale, Yolande flushed like a child, almost exultant at not having been left behind and outdone.

"You could not cheat me, you could not get away from me, Grand'mère. What should I have said to my father and my mother if you had gone without me? Bah! I am your young recruit, *ma mère*, whom you enlisted an age ago, and what have I done that you should try to get rid of me?—that you should think me a *poltronne* to hold back when you lead the way?"

For once in her life Grand'mère wrung her hands at the disobedience of Yolande.

"What is it that you have done, unfortunate one? Is there to be no young hostage recovered from the wreck for the poor fugitives who were persuaded to go? My heart bleeds for them, for Hubert, for Philippine."

But even while Grand'mère spoke, it became evident that remonstrance and return were too late for Yolande. An indefinite intuition, a vague doubt was working itself into a certainty, and changing into the muttering of baffled exasperation. There would be no farther protraction of the business, or any lingering for dusk to veil the cruelty and shame of its completion. Pricked on, feet and hands would plant the ladder and wield the axe in the provocation of the revenge which was to have been so sweet—the perpetrators feeling that, in their clumsy tardiness, revenge and prey were alike slipping through their fingers. There would be brief bandying of rough words with the women-servants and Black Jasper, ere the three were gagged and tied to buffet and bed-post, with the doors double locked upon them, and the full stream of the riot surging on the track of Grand'mère and Yolande.

"I meant to give an old, travel-stained, worn-out offering," confessed Grand'mère; "but it was not worthy, there must be another—the best we have to present of the youth and the flower of the stock. I thought to buy life for my child, but God says, 'No, it must be death,' for that is purer and sweeter with an immortal purity and sweetness, and God knows best. Ah! well, Yolande, we will go in and announce ourselves and deliver ourselves together. There is one thing, see you, we will purge those floors forever of their rude grossness; they will not have the heart for it, they will have the fear of it, after the glory of what we will do."

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## SEDGE POND'S LOVE TO GRAND'MÈRE.

THE turmoil in the village street was concentrated in the passages of the ale-house. The motliest parties of women, as well as of men, were tugging and tearing their way there. But even there, opportune little lanes opened occasionally. Taking one of these at the moment it presented itself, Grand'mère and Yolande, half walking and half borne on by the pressure around them, struggled up the very centre of the kitchen before their entrance was called in question.

"Messieurs," said Grand'mère, suddenly, in quavering but gallant accents, which broke like a thunder-clap through the brawling and blustering of the conspirators, "here I am, and my granddaughter Yolande, and my stick, as you sought. It is better that I should come into the midst of you of my own will, than that you should batter the Shottery Cottage to the ground, to the anger of my lady and the loss of a new tenant, and only have my body, after all, like that of a crushed rat from under the stones. Here I am, to give an account of myself, with all that intimately belongs to me; for you would not abuse yourselves to punish the poor domestics, your own country-women, the lacquey of Monsieur, your rector. What is your will, my friends, who call yourselves my enemies?"

Silence followed Grand'mère's appeal, broken but by the rattling of mugs and cans, as foot nudged foot, and elbow jogged elbow, and by the rustling of shagged heads, and nodding of flushed faces, and the blast of many breaths drawn simultaneously.

"Dickens," even Master Swinfen, the bragging, unscrupulous landlord, found nothing farther to splutter out "who'd e'er ha'e thought it? What can ha'e brought the women here, unless they knowed that I'd like no hand laid on them on the premises? It aint in my power to say more; but I shan't go for to offer them seats."

"They've knowed that you'd not like no violence in the house, Mat"—his wife stuck out her scraggy neck, and distilled her drops of vinegar. "They seek to *sorn* on your protection, the cunning Jews ; but they've been a-long of coming, they and the whole race of them—tell 'em that."

"Nay, now, what a speerit be in the witch," burst out a countryman, in sheer extremity of wonder, "to think she be a dame like another, and as old as Grandmother ! The speerit of Sarten hissen mun be in her."

"Go!" Grand'mère answered the observation with quick wit. "I show you your yellow beak. You read your Scriptures ill. 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,' your Scriptures say—is it not so ? On the contrary, you have resisted me, and behold I am come among you."

As yet no hand had been put on Grand'mère and Yolande, and no challenge addressed to them. It seemed as if this boldness and innocence would, by a master-stroke of daring and confidence, disarm their antagonists, and win the day.

Grand'mère thought so, and her Gallic spirit rose higher, and her Gallic tongue shaped its words anew into ready, shrewd, epigrammatic sentences, not suspecting that they were so many pearls of speech cast before swine. "But why have you gone to surround me, messieurs, my friends ? What is it that you have to say to me ? It is necessary that I do not tap my mule in vain. Let us clear up the difference—let us examine into the ground of dispute. Here I am, waiting, dying of the wish and the hope to remove it—pack it up, and send it away across the seas. We may dispense with the four beggars of conversation—the wind, the rain, the sun, the moon—in such circumstances, and strike to the heart of the matter at once. What have I done ?"

"What ha'e ye not done ?" the growl arose, as the swine turned upon her to rend her, in that deceptive slowness of thought, and speech, and action, which first crawled, and then leaped, at their conclusion—"You and the man of you ha'e used us as decoys and blinds—ha'e robbed and abused us. Where be our king's bounty, that ye ha'e battened on with your courts and stews, your coaches, your bro-cards, and taffities, while we and the loikes of we ha'e been morling and starving on groats and in drugget ? Good

enough for the loikes of we, my measters ; while furrin trash, as could never meet us in fair fight, were a-riding ower our heads, and a-kicking up their heels, and a-mocking of us ! And that were not all ; but ye mun poke and worm into our willage, and castle, and rectory—nobbut our pig-stys, and larn all we ha'e and all we do for to tell tales to base adventurers, loike your sons and swag- gering land and sea captains. And as that were not all, neither, and more by a deal than honest flesh and blood could stand, but ye mun seek to pizen and play your can- trips on us and on our beasteses with your possets and your plaisters, and your cussed wags and winks."

With each additional charge, the clenched hands rang louder on the table ; the eyes, as they stared at Grand'mère and Yolande, widened and widened, until the speakers half rose, bent and swayed nearer to the two women.

Grand'mère looked from one blinded, besotted face to another, completely taken aback. "Do you believe this?" she remonstrated at last. "Me who wished only to do you good ? I swear it. But how I have deceived myself!" Her words were unheard, unheeded. There was a rush, a sweep of hulking giants, muddled with beer, fired with gin, smarting under the galling burden of huge wrong, with which they had loaded themselves. If some of their own number had not stumbled and tripped up others, they would have borne down Grand'mère and Yolande, and trodden them under their iron heels on the spot. There was a scuffle, a shriek, but there was time to think of treating Grand'mère and Yolande in the orthodox fash- ion. "Drive 'em amongst the street where they flaunted, drive 'em loike the cattle they be, pluck their borrowed plumes off their false backs, duck 'em among the newt and the fish they are so fond on, in their own stew—an old harridan—a dulciny—hussies—thieves—traitors—furriners!"

Grand'mère and Yolande were caught, hustled, and dragged toward the door. Master Swinfen interposed no farther to keep the peace than to call out in hypocritical solemnity, "I takes all good people to witness that them French Madames came into this here house will he, nill he, and that they depart without thanks to me for their dis- missal."

“Amen,” responded Mistress Swinfen officiously, in the character of a clerk.

Grand’mère prayed one imploring prayer to her persecutors, “Are there no fathers and mothers here to have pity on a young girl? You men and women, whose daughters I—yes, I saved you—is there not one to save my child?”

And Yolande, in an agony, urged in turn, “Spare Grand’mère—the grey-headed woman. We go with you, we do not think to refuse, but force her not to move so fast, she can not walk like that. Have you no old women of your own? Think you not to grow old yourselves, the youngest and strongest of you?”

There was no retreating. There were only taunts of “Where be your own man, your Mounseer, the plunderer, smuggler, gallows-bird, as cut and run and left you to your deserts?—sure he knew your price. Where be his honor Master Lushington, and his worship Master Hoadley, as you beguiled for a season, and my lady’s son, and Master George, and the rectory family, as you had debauched an’ you could? Your grand friends had as lief not be by, the day.” The rough ribaldry of the men was hideously travestied by the women and the children. If there were any of the inhabitants of Sedge Pond who thought better of what the devil had tempted them to; and drew back into their houses, and looked out scared and horrified at the extent of their outrage, they were too late to do any good by their change of mind, and they shrank from the odium of expressing the change.

The two women spoke no more, save to each other.

“The gutter is low, Yolande, but Heaven is high.”

“Yes, Grand’mère, it is very high—would that it were not so high!”

“It will soon be near, poor *petite*.”

They prayed no more, save to Him who can hear in the roar of the street rabble as in the peace of the best oratory on a mountain side—among ruthless assailants as among rapt fellow-worshipers.

After all, it was only the mobbing, or, at the worst, the ducking of two Huguenot women, left behind by their natural protector, about the time when prime ministers—Lord North for one—were rolled in the London mud.

There was nothing grand, lurid, or ghastly, hardly any thing picturesque, in the crime and its accessories. The squalid village street, the stupid, besotted smock-frocks, with the individual figures of Grand'mère and Yolande soon lost in the mass, and over all the quiet, pale, misty English light, made up the picture. The whole affair was like one of those commonplace, every-day, drudging lives, which we have all along slighted, till a test is suddenly applied, and we start back self-condemned, self-abased, and a little awed, because we had been so near holy ground, and did not so much as guess it. For what we called commonplace and every-day—that was our humanity, the drudgery was devotion, and the unobtrusive stillness and cool coloring were as the effect of the moon's rays when it calms and tones down, as well as purifies and glorifies the loud, glaring earth. And the test which opened our sealed eyes was the unexpected ending of the unvalued lives, the deaths endured steadfastly, and for duty's sake.

And, alas ! though Yolande could make the stormy progress, and hold the young life which still abounded in its strength within her, the old life, which had come through much, and borne a brave and bright front to this day, was running out and sinking low, by the time she was pulled, jostled, and thrust back to Shottery Cottage, its entrance gateless now, its garden spoiled, and its pond a pool.

Hours before all this, the rector had ridden to the Mall and found that the young squire had gone on business to Reedham, where he followed, and overtook Mr. Gage in the market-place.

"I have been across to the Mall to see you, squire," announced the rector.

And Caleb expressed his regret at having missed the visit, wondering in his private mind to what cause he should attribute the honor of so special a call.

"I must have your concurrence to get a detachment of yeomen to gallop over to Sedge Pond. The village is in an uproar, and I am no longer able to bring the country people to reason single-handed," proceeded the rector.

The season for burning ricks was not come, but an indistinct vision of doggedly local frays between village and village presented itself to Caleb Gage's imagination, and he thought of his father's object in life, and the power of

his memory in these parts, and fancied the remedy disproportionate to the evil. He was inclined to try other means and personal venture before proceeding to desperate blood-letting and putting in irons.

"Had we not better ride over together, and try a little expostulation first? If we give the wild set a little time to cool down, and not come so hard and fast upon them, would it not be better?" suggested the young man.

"I don't know what you call coming hard and fast upon them, sir, or how much time you mean to give to a wild set to wreak their heathen savageness," protested the rector in bitter impatience, as he recalled his own delusion of saying "back" to the flood of ignorant prejudice and intemperate rage, and expecting to see the proud waves recede at his bidding before his prouder eyes. "They are my parishioners, and I should know them. If we do not look sharp, I tell you, a pack of curs will worry and throttle a few harmless sheep in the person of the fine old French Madame and her family."

The rector had no farther need to stir up his hearer. The words sent Caleb Gage, the whiter and sterner of the two, to demand the yeomen to be put under the command of the rector and him. Nay, Caleb Gage did not wish to wait for the astonished farmers and clothworkers to put themselves into their accoutrements, so that they might start with their jingling spurs and ringing bridles—he would have gone off like the wind himself to cope with the mob alone. It was all that the rector could do to detain his coadjutor under assurances of the comparative immunity of Grand'mère and her household within Shottery Cottage till night-fall. The rector wanted the weight of the squire of the Mall's support to stimulate the zeal of the patriotic yeomen now called out to redress a public wrong, for this was no case of smashed machinery and invaded barns—with which native clothworkers and farmers could mutually sympathize. It was a mere brush at a nest of rascally foreigners, who had already come under the ban of the government; so that these English beef-eaters, half informed and hugely indifferent, would have been quite inclined to leave the Sedge Pond villagers to finish their work without any troublesome interference on their part. What helped the rector was that the question was not one

of marauders who might be left to defend themselves, but of a handful of women; and though British gorges could swallow a good deal in the shape of devastation where foreigners were concerned, the most bull-headed among them revolted at this mean morsel.

Toward sunset, while the low beams of the sun still fell broad on Sedge Pond, the rector and Caleb Gage, with their company of yeomen, clattered into the empty street. The normal state of the village was so sluttish and squalid that no additional mark of ill-doing and disorder made much impression upon it. But the vacation of the place even by women and children was suspicious. "There is some mischief afloat at the cottage," cried the rector, excitedly, while Caleb Gage's pale face flushed fiery red, "but it is impossible they can have gone to extremity." The gap where the garden gate had stood was discovered the moment the force came in sight of the Shottery Cottage, but the cottage itself, save for its shattered windows and closed shutters, which the rector had seen in the morning, presented no change and offered no sign. If the convulsive sobs of Black Jasper, the gushing sighs and the hollow groans of Prie, and the denunciations and vociferations of Deb to be let out to eat her words and fight frantically for her old Madame and her young Ma'mselle, were resounding within the walls, they did not reach the ears of the coming rescuers.

But when the riders looked over the garden wall, they saw a repulsive sight enough. The little garden lay before them swarming with smock-frocks, not pressing toward the house, but standing round the fish-pond. Its stone margin was shattered, its waters troubled, and it was covered with circles and bells of foam. The crowd was startled by the measured beat of the horses' feet. The clink and clash of the riders' arms were sounds not totally unfamiliar. Some of the countrymen present had heard the ominous interlude when the smoke from the smouldering cocks of hay and sheaves of corn was polluting the fresh fields. The gang, actors and spectators, stopped the occupation on which they had been intent, and presented to the yeomen and their leaders a small sea of rabid faces. But the foremost figures did not let go their two prisoners. Two women, with their clothes torn

and dripping, were seen standing and sinking down in the mud. Murder might, ere now, have been committed on the principal offender, if one fierce and stalwart man had taken upon him the execution of the deed. But when a crowd of delirious men tried it all at once, so that the criminal, whose venerable, feeble limbs had bent so often to her God, and to no other, had to go down several times into the water to receive her last baptism of humiliation and death, the business was neither so mercifully brief nor thorough.

Caleb Gage at once sprang from his horse, but the rector sat at the head of his yeomen and waved his hand, delivering his orders, "Let go these ladies; stop this work, I say, or, as sure as I am a man of peace, and an ordained priest, and you the barbarians I have been accustomed to call my people, the yeomen behind me shall ride in and cut down every man of you!"

The scum of the Sedge Pond villagers were as far from cowards as from saints. But the instinctive shrinking of all disorderly masses, from any thing like a trained band, governed by law and duty, soon showed itself. The square towers of yeomen, sitting there, with frowning brows under their helmets, and their hands clenched in their gauntlets, when they were brought to close quarter with so villainous a job as this, held the sway of masters over laborers.

The smock-frocks fell back a little with a grim, surly awkwardness of concession; their staring, blood-shot eyes blinking uneasily at the speaker. But before the people could do more, before the piercing cry of Yolande, "Monsieur Caleb! Caleb Gage! for my sake, save Grand'mère!" could reach Caleb, Grand'mère herself had heard the voice of a friend, and raising herself on the arms of her jailers and executioners, who were forced to hold her still that she might slide to the ground, announced eagerly in accents audible enough for those around her to hear, "Monsieur the rector, I am here, neither killed nor wounded; slay nobody for me."

They were the last coherent words which Grand'mère ever spoke. She fell back after the effort and sank into unconsciousness. Her strength ebbed rapidly away during the hours that she survived, notwithstanding that help of

every sort was at hand. All that remorseful pity and tenderness, all that friendship and devotion, could do, was done. Carried into her own house, laid on her home bed, she was lovingly waited on by her people and her child. The leech-craft of a country clergyman like the rector and a young squire, bred as Caleb Gage had been, was at her service. The old squire's friend, the good Reedham doctor, who liked to attend by the sick-beds of the Methodists because they died well, was brought over, but he could only shake his head and say that he could do nothing. A mighty deal more than he could do had been done for so brave and sweet a martyr. Madam from the rectory came to watch by her, and Milly and Dolly Rolle to weep their eyes out for her; and Mr. Hoadley was here too, the great tears diminishing the light of his own big black eyes, with the injunction, "Weep not for the blessed dead, but the miserable living," on his tongue. The old Frenchwoman in her last moments was looked on with more yearning and reverence than any lady or queen could have been, notwithstanding that she died of the maltreatment dealt to the lowest of her kind, and awarded to her by the men and women among whom she had dwelt, and whom she had served with her best.

After sense was gone, and while speech remained, Grand'mère rambled characteristically. Now her imagination was full of one of the great hunts in her native forests, and of the *halili* resounding through the glades for a royal boar. Again she was comforting her son for her fate, "I suffered it with all my heart for you, Hubert; only be you ready for me." Then she was recalling and summing up promise after promise to which she had clung, and as if they had never failed her—an escape from the windy storm and tempest, a tabernacle to be hidden in from the strife of tongues, the hills to which she would lift her eyes and from whence should come her aid. Grand'mère's last words were to Yolande, "But, *pauvrette*, it is well—wait."

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## MEN'S WAYS AND GOD'S WAYS.

EVERY body was sorry for Yolande. Every body was good to her. It was as if the electricity long latent in a sultry atmosphere had exhausted itself in a great storm, and the air was not only clear and fresh at last, but the sun, and the south wind, and the soft rain were all fain to lift up, refresh, and restore the beaten-down, broken herbage. It was as if the world had suddenly become aware of a great debt incumbent on it to pay, and Yolande the sole creditor—a great amends to make, and she the only receiver.

True, there were hulking, creeping figures of men and women, who turned into their houses, and skulked behind their doors in the summer sunshine, when Yolande passed along. There were men and women who removed from Sedge Pond, and betook themselves to other localities, unable to bear the silent reproach of the simple presence of one who was more forlorn than an orphan among them. And these whilom villagers, carrying their consciences full of perilous stuff, went from bad to worse, and waxed reprobate. But, as a rule, the remorse of Sedge Pond for the consummation of wrong to the Dupuys, took the turn of repentance.

“Nay, them weren’t so bad as they were called, not by a long chalk,” the village worthies assured each other, first sneakingly and then boldly, with rueful shakes of the head and compunctious groans. “They wouldn’t ha’ been so game when they came to be mauled. We’re free to bet they be of the right sort as has that kind of might of patience—ne’er a squale nor a curse between the two. Nay, but eh ! Lord ! her as was done for bade Pearson hold yeomen’s swords. Heard ye that, lads ? And it were gospel that her were cruel kind to we in the sickness long since. How could we go to try what we did ? We ought to be black ashamed of ourselves, forever and a day ;” and deep

shame, softened by a wish to do better, broke the hard hearts of the villagers.

The old autocracy of the ale-house came rapidly down, until the ale-house itself reformed, and its worst features were blotted out by universal consent.

With the family at the rectory Yolande in her desolation found a temporary shelter, and Madam coddled her as a child of her own; for Grand'mère had been good to Madam's Milly in her trouble, the Milly who had come well through it all, and was soon to be the honored wife of a young clergyman. The couple were preparing to set up house together at the Corner Farm, and would fain have begged, borrowed, or stolen Yolande as a guest, to whom hospitality was a sacred duty, and the entertainment of whom would bring a blessing with it; while the squire of the Mall would have given his life to have afforded her another and a lasting refuge. And seeing that Milly and Mr. Hoadley were showing other young people so good an example, it did not seem as if it would have been unnatural or unbecoming in the circumstances, had Yolande Dupuy, submitting to what were at last the well-known and accredited wishes of the squire, laid aside her mourning, for one day, and made one visit to the Sedge Pond church, thus providing two sweet and serious-minded brides instead of one. In this case it was judged correctly that Monsieur and Madame, from their remote Huguenot refuge in the Americas, compelled as they were to bow to the most terrible blow which could have befallen them, would acquiesce thankfully in the completion of the settlement which Grand'mère had herself proposed for her child.

Prie and Deb, persuaded that they had received a last commission to this effect from Grand'mère, were proposing to follow Yolande's fortunes wherever her wandering footsteps might lead her. Even Black Jasper, holding always his main duty to the rectory family, hovered, like a member of Yolande's staff—far from unattached in the sense of the affections—round the grandchild of the beautiful old lady who had noticed him and been kind to him, and whose name he could no more mention without a copious effusion of grateful and enthusiastic tears, than he could mention that of Captain Philip without the characteristic tribute. And there was this other point of union between

Black Jasper and Yolande, that while the soft fellow had picked up an acquired taste for a quality at the moral antipodes to his own—the severe criticism of Deb Potts—he had at the same time an immense sympathy with Ma'mselle, whom he regarded as under a perpetual exposure to this rasping, ruffling influence.

Yolande was made more of than she had ever been before. The very weather petted her, for the tardy, fitful spring burst into a serenely beautiful summer, with a radiance and exuberance tempered as if to meet the needs of aching hearts and weary eyes. Yet, underlying all the loving-kindness which God and man lavished upon her, there was a piteousness, which Yolande put away from her sometimes, wringing her hands because it only gave her a deeper realization, a fuller comprehension of the extent of her loss.

“Oh! my friends, do not have such pity for me! Neglect, thwart, blame me as formerly, and then I shall not, on all sides, in every beating of my heart, feel that Grand’mère is gone forever from this world. You are very good, but none of you, nor the earth, nor the sky, is Grand’mère. Yes, I know it well, she is a glorified spirit; but I—I am, and may be for as long a time as she was in the body, only a poor, weak, sinful, mortal woman. I did every thing with Grand’mère—I was always with Grand’mère. You can not think, you good people, who live simply for God and your fellow-creatures, and are otherwise self-sufficing and independent, or who have your hearts spread over many friends—how I shiver in my loneliness, and shriek in my mutilation, even though He be with us in His grace alway to the end of the world.”

Yes, Yolande needed every solace to bring her back to life, for was she not bereft indeed? It belonged to her nature that in the comparative negation of a French girl’s personality, she had been bound up in Grand’mère—that she had lived a dual and not a single life—that in almost every thing she had been associated and identified with the noble and sweet old woman who was gone to kindred spirits; and that not even her attachment to Caleb Gage, visionary and romantic as it had been, had broken the union. Therefore, though Yolande was godly, reverent, true, tender, a fair scholar in Grand’mère’s school of meek-

ness, and a daughter and heiress of Grand'mère's in the gift of wide sympathy and inexhaustible hopefulness, she could not help feeling as if part of her nature was at once buried in the earth and flown to the skies—as if there was a yawning chasm always open before her feet, with the blue distance a complete blank. She sickened in spirit, and drooped in heart and mind, and wore black in soul as well as in body for the earthly, human deprivation of Grand'mère until her friends feared for her, that she would not recover from the blow and loss, but would wither under them, if not die, a martyr to natural affection, which is liable to weakness and morbidness in its anguish, for the very reason that it is less than divine; and so men, not God (thank Heaven, never God!), call it idolatry.

"After all that has been said, to make no farther way—it is very disheartening. I declare, I am afraid it is a bad job."

"Then, sir, I conclude you think I had better give it up?"

The speakers were the rector and Squire Gage, who had fraternized to such an extent lately, that the rector had just arrested the squire, a little against his will, on his road to the rectory, and set him down at the table which, in fine weather, stood over against the holly-hedge, where the rector was wont to smoke his afternoon pipe, and drink his glass of claret or Madeira, and study his fortnightly newspaper and his correspondence. And here Madam would bring her fine stitching, and be informed and enlightened by her lord and master on whatever matters of public or parish interest he should judge to be within her capacity. This was the age for men reading to women; and whatever ideas, outside the women's private experience, got into their heads, and simmered and made little ebullitions from these thinly-tenanted settlements, they had the men to thank or to blame for them.

It was such a day as that on which Grand'mère and the Sedge Pond villagers had had their last encounter, and put the final seal to their intercourse. Only the silvery light of spring had become the golden light of summer. For dim, blue, scentless periwinkles in dark green ivy, there were now vivid roses, heavy with all sweetness in the rich russet of their leaves, orange flame of lilies, ripe oaten

straws and honeysuckle, and nothing cold but the blossoms of the jessamine, which show among companion flowers like stars seen by day, and which need a background of night or age to bring out their purity, peacefulness, trustfulness.

All over the meads and the uplands, the castle woods and the very Waäste—which Caleb Gage knew and loved with a power and intensity of appreciation which is like an additional faculty of soul and charm of existence to some men and women—there were the same seasonable efflorescence and bounty for beast, and bird, and insect. Herds standing in the river lowed, and flocks on the wing warbled and sang, and bees hummed, filling the great plain and the whole row of hives with the murmur of the sea, as if all nature united, and did well to unite, and say, that the winter was gone and the summer was come, and it depended on God to repair the breaches of the past, and give back what was lost in the future. For though Captain Philip had been shot at Ticonderoga, and Grand'mère done to death in the village street, they but slept the sleep of the justified, to awake and rise again in the fullness of life, at the restitution and fruition of all things. It was inanimate nature, and nature in the lower animals, which were first resigned to this travail, and afterward content, even ravished. Humanity came last, where it was resigned at all. As for the rector's words, which had rather been a reflection spoken aloud, than a speech addressed to his friend, they sounded nearer pettish despair. Mr. Philip Rolle started at their instant application, and laughed a little.

"I did not mean your suit," he exclaimed, "I meant the spiritual condition of my parish—mine, which if any man invaded during the last five-and-twenty years, I held him as a moral and spiritual poacher, an unauthorized social depredator. And the end on't is, that after holding forth in the church for a good quarter of a century, baptizing, marrying, burying, I have lived to lead a detachment of yeomanry to put down—too late to prevent—the most craven atrocity perpetrated in my time."

"I suppose all men are alike in doing their work after fashions which they little expected to follow?" replied Caleb, with a smothered sigh of relief. "Who would have said to John Wesley—Mr. John, as my father used to call

him—when he was the honored Fellow of an Oxford college, or to his father before him, when he was one of the most loyal clergymen of the Church of England, that the day would come when, standing on his father's tombstone, because the son was forbidden admittance to the church where his own brother-in-law officiated, the learned scholar and punctilious priest should exhort thousands of lawless disciples?"

"I should not have said it, certainly," accorded Mr. Philip Rolle, a little stiffly, and hastened to go on. "And I suppose my dear old Madame could never have guessed the ignominy and cruelty which we had in store for her, else she would have gone with her precious son. Now that we have made an end of her, and see her and her task in the clearness of a history that is finished—good Lord! what a devout, generous soul! what a magnanimous, gentle life was hers! If Lushington vows in the open market that the horrid crime is enough to make him shut the 'Rolle Arms,' what can I do with the church here?"

"What will you think of me, sir," asked Caleb Gage in return, in the sternness of self-condemnation, "when I tell you that in spite of my father's remonstrances, I saw nothing in old Madame Dupuy but the traces of a meddlesome, affected, fantastic old woman, till I had offended her so grievously that I could not presume to intrude into her presence. I can believe, now, how like Yolande she was."

"Or, rather, where Yolande got her fine qualities from," the rector corrected him. "You were hugely wrong in your first opinion. In spite of Grand'mère's French acuteness and fineness of tact, she was the most guileless old woman I ever knew. She could not credit the bitter badness of evil—witness how the quality of my kindred, to their shame be it spoken, had her undone; she was the cleverest of the set—cleverer even than my lady; but they got the better of her whenever they sought to do it, and always would, in a way. This moan for her is easily made, too"—and the rector, in his exasperation, took a letter of my lady's from his pocket, and read out a passage of it—"So the *bourgeoisie* De Sevigné has been mobbed and trodden out of this world. I may be wrong, but I think the original was better bred, and would have stood more

misusage. I should like to see the mob who would maltreat me. But I don't deny that it was a monstrously shocking end. How could the Sedge Pond villagers bring it about to the beautiful old woman? Only, you know, Philip, that she went in for being an enthusiast and a saint, which was working for the persecution that befell her." The rector crumpled up the letter, and read no farther, although Lady Rolle had written on boldly, "Whatever punishment I may meet, I never pretended to be any better than my neighbors. And I am growing an old woman now, with my very sons turning upon me. There's George on the top of his marriage with that woman, Gerty Lowndes, though he knows that I'll never speak to one or t'other of them after it. For the fox and wolf, Heneage, he would fain rout me out of the shoes he wants to fill; but he shan't while there is breath in my body, and I'll keep it there as long as I can, to spite my dutiful son. These are my wages, and Grand'mère, poor wretch, had hers; that is all there is to be said."

In the mean time, the rector was re-filling his pipe, and making an apology, "I beg your pardon, my good fellow, if I don't seem to sympathize with your contrition. I must say that your lamentable mistake is rather a consolatory fact to a hot-headed, high-handed old sinner like myself, being, as it is, a crying instance of how good people misread and villify each other's credentials. We must wait for the light of another world to spell them out correctly, and to consent freely to range ourselves in the same company. Even death, opening the door for a moment, helps us," echoed the rector, pricked in his conscience by the recollection of how long the good squire of the Mall had been to him as a heathen, and how he had needed, before he could feel his obstinate hostility melting away, to go to the squire's funeral feast, see with his own eyes the good works which should follow the dead man, where no other possessions could find a place; hear the widows, the orphans, and the outcast weeping, and telling what Squire Gage had done for them; grasp the hand of the chief mourner, and think of his own son Philip, who was spared mourning for him.

"But you had as lief keep your own counsel on this little matter," added the rector after a pause. "It is a mar-

vel that poor Yolande can abide the sight of any of us, or of the very houses and fields even. For her sake, as well as yours, my friend, I should be right glad to speed your wooing."

"I believe you would; and I am more obliged for that than for any other token of your regard," acknowledged Caleb; "but I must tell you I mean to tell every thing to Yolande," he declared steadily.

The rector looked askance at the step.

"What! wound a poor thing wounded already, in what looks like mere wantonness and fatality—damage your own cause, for no purpose but to satisfy some overstrained scruple, selfish in its origin and effect. Pardon me, squire, I thought you had more common sense and self-mastery. However, you are at liberty to manage your own affair as you think proper. You ought to know, and I dare say the women would say that I was a sorry adviser in such a case," he broke off, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"You have given me good advice before now; you have been a good friend to me and to Yolande, which is far more, sir. But I can not help telling her every thing. It may have been my father's way with my mother; or I may have learned the trick from long listening to what he never passed a day without alluding to. No one could live with my father and not hear of his first and best friend. I don't think I have much chance. I fancy Yolande is only waiting for the opportunity of joining her father and her mother, and not caring much even for that. I know it is not quite right in her, but only consider how fond she was of the old woman whom you describe as a saint as well as a martyr, and how she was deprived of her. Yet I don't suppose Yolande hates any of us—least of all the place where her friend's body is laid to rest. And though she cares for the dust, she could leave it, because, as it was put into the garner without will and power of hers, so it can not suffer farther desecration or be lost, though it should be scattered to the four winds. Yolande will never have any man for her husband, or consent to fill any relation in life for which she does not care; and she has no feeling except weariness. But even though I ran ten times more risk, I can not help it—I must confess to Yolande my brutal preju-

dice, dullness, and doggedness, and what they cost me. Perhaps," he added, with a desperate sigh, "after she hears me, she will not wonder so much that there were caitiffs and murderers in Sedge Pond who could lift their hands against such women; and for our very lowness and loss she may pity us."

"You are infected, man," represented the rector. "I don't mean to say that you are not upright and honorable, a very good neighbor and squire, and a member of my church of whom I may be proud, and from whom I may receive a lesson; but I protest all the same that you are infected with ultra-liberal and Quixotic notions. Madam Gage—if you get her—will be lifted clean out of her sphere, and have her head turned—luckily it is a notably reasonable head for a woman, like that of her poor blessed Grand'mère. As you are determined to cut your own throat, as the saying is, the next thing is to provide you with as many occasions for the deed as possible, and send you at once to the silly girls in the garden—hey?" suggested the rector, not much shaken in his conviction that Caleb, in his infatuation, was going the road to ruin his prospects with Yolande—provoked at it, too, sorry for it, yet somehow feeling called upon, as the kindest of human creatures feel in their neighbors' concerns of this description, to turn round and make a joke of this alone of all troubles.

Caleb could not see the propriety of the joke, but he accepted the rector's invitation, and went to seek the girls and his fate in the rectory garden.

Caleb Gage had become more familiar with girls than when he sat first with Yolande in the Shottery Cottage parlor, and mistook her shyness for pride, her fine intelligence and natural attainments for pedantry and French polish. But he had not lost, and would never lose his habit of thinking of girls as his sisters, who might have grown up with him, and brightened and beautified indefinitely what had not been an unhappy and unsocial youth at the Mall. He could not help remarking now how the rectory girls became the rectory garden, and seemed to fall into their proper places among its sunny sloping strawberry banks, its shady miniature orchards, its aromatic herb-beds, and its tufts of honest, sweet old English flowers, with character-

istic English names, from Sweet William to heart's-ease, which, instead of disdaining their humble surroundings, flourished amazingly in them. Caleb built a castle in the air of the restoration of the Mall garden, and then thought how not only one corner formally set apart for an Eden, but the whole Mall would prove a wilderness if he did not win the Eve he sought.

Milly and Dolly Rolle were superintending Black Jasper ~~pulling~~ cherries—cherries themselves, the two girls, in their buxom bloom; while Black Jasper, on his ladder, was like a huge black plum. The girls stood at the foot of the tree, and every riper, more tempting bunch than another, Milly confiscated for the best-behaved children in Mr. Hoadley's new school; and if any regard for Mr. Hoadley's gratification and gratitude was included in the gift, Grand'mère would not have held that its merit was therefore impaired. Dolly contented herself with a heap of rose leaves, and a sheaf of lavender to add to Madam's stores.

Yolande had not spirit or strength even for such light employments, and had crept away to the mossy alcove in the wall, where, leaning back against the dank, hoary stones, she looked as fair and pale as the chaste glimmer of the jasmine stars amid the gloom of their setting of leaves, while her once busy hands, crossed listlessly in her lap, showed as shady in their slenderness, as if they were bathed in moonshine.

Caleb Gage did not join Yolande to chide her—to remind her that there was still work in the world for her to do—to call her to account for questioning the decrees of God, and resisting His will. He did not understand in this sense “a time to mourn” with Yolande, when she was stricken in the tenderest affections which had grown with her growth. Besides, Mr. Hoadley took this mission on himself, and although Yolande invariably recognized his excellent intentions, and would grant to him at the end of his lectures, “Yes, I am *égoiste*, or my heart would not ache so; but it is my heart and my sorrow, and I can not make them other than they are. You—you were Grand'mère's friend—that contains all; you are good to speak thus to me, and I am here to listen.”

But it did not seem that Yolande was much benefited

in other respects by Mr. Hoadley's eagerness in undertaking to enter into every heart's bitterness, and to reconcile the whole world in tribulation to the extent of its deprivations.

Caleb Gage was not impatient of Yolande's grief; he did not wish to sap the tender fidelity in friendship of the woman he cared for by seeking to put it away from her. By his own experience he would have judged *that* the most dishonoring to God and to her of all the modes which even good people have invented of dealing with sorrow. "Sorrow not without hope"—that he could say; and Yolande did not sorrow without hope, in the dreary vast void of unbelief, or the ghostly death-in-life of despair. Neither did she refuse to say, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth to Him good!" Only she could not see why He did it, and the deed, in its mystery of righteousness and mercy, was none the less a deed of anguish. And she did sorrow. Grand'mère had been brother and sister, as well as old mother to her, and without her sorrow she would have been faithless alike to Grand'mère and herself. And Grand'mère was violently taken from her by that stroke with which, at its gentlest, no repetition makes us familiar; which is still as awful a miracle as when it silenced the tongue, stiffened the limbs, and reft the soul from Abel, carrying it into that unseen, unheard, unfelt world, before the unfathomableness of which, had not the Son of Man returned from it, and had not the dim foreshadowing of His return stretched through all the ages before Him, as the narrative of His return, written in letters of heavenly fire, illuminates the darkness after Him—hearts must have hardened into stone, or groveled in brutality.

Caleb wanted to share Yolande's sorrow, to cherish it, train it, lift it to endure, for time and eternity, a brighter and holier joy. He was welcome to sit with her and talk to her of Grand'mère—more welcome and more prized than, in her present state, she could comprehend; and she only marked the fact by being a little less outwardly grateful to him than to others, a little less careful of trespassing on his kindness.

"This time last year Grand'mère and me, we did such a thing together, Monsieur"—Yolande was making her moan—"and it is not only that we shall never do the same

thing again, but that all the occasions on which we did it before seem somehow shivered in their reality, and steeped in tears, so that I can not sometimes quite believe that such events happened at all—that I did not dream them, as I dream of Grand'mère now, and wake and find her image a dream; or that she and I could ever have been joyous and full of confidence together, when we knew always that one day we must part, and might walk asunder in different worlds, for long years. It is not only the future which is taken from me, but the past also. Monsieur, I feel myself not only a shattered wreck of what I was, but a phantom among other phantoms, whose blindness is such that we do not know till the crash comes, and the inconceivable change has passed over our circle, that we are no more than so many phantoms."

"There was one who dwelt among us," Caleb told the sorrow-laden girl, "who went and came again on that journey from which none of us comes back, and His command was to touch Him, and feel that He had flesh and bones as we have. He was not a phantom first or last; and neither are we spectres, whether we exist body and spirit, or in the spirit alone. It is all reality there as well as here. Now, you doubt the reality of the latter, because you can no longer demonstrate to yourself the reality of the former. If you reasoned by an inverse and truer process, what you have known should prove to you what you do not know. But, Mademoiselle Yolande, while you grieve for Grand'mère, with whom you had such communion as I think I can understand, do you never think what it would have been had you lived like a stranger to her?—had you shown her no regard, and had no happiness in which she had borne a part, till you discovered too late what you two might have been to each other?"

"Oh! you do not know!" cried Yolande brokenly, thinking of the day when Grand'mère had said to her, "Even you and I, *petite*, when we shall be separated, we shall see chambers in each other's hearts which we did not enter, doors which we did not open, vows which we did not pay."

"But I do know," Caleb Gage interrupted her hastily; "I misunderstood, undervalued Grand'mère. You must have known this, and condemned me for it, Yolande."

Yolande looked at him and shook her head. "How could

I, when she did not condemn you? *Sans doute!* it was quite another thing from your misunderstanding and undervaluing me; but still Grand'mère and I, we were one, and she did not condemn you. But what a loss you had!"

"Ay, what a loss! But for my father, I could not have formed a notion of my mother, and your Grand'mère might have been mine; and see, I have lost her also!"

"I will tell you about her, Monsieur Caleb," volunteered Yolande impulsively.

"Will you? That will be indeed like Grand'mère's child."

"Yes, Grand'mère would have made it all up to you, *mille fois*. She would have rejoiced to render you rich with her best blessing, which, when you knew no better, for a little moment you despised—and she is gone, like the good squire your father!"

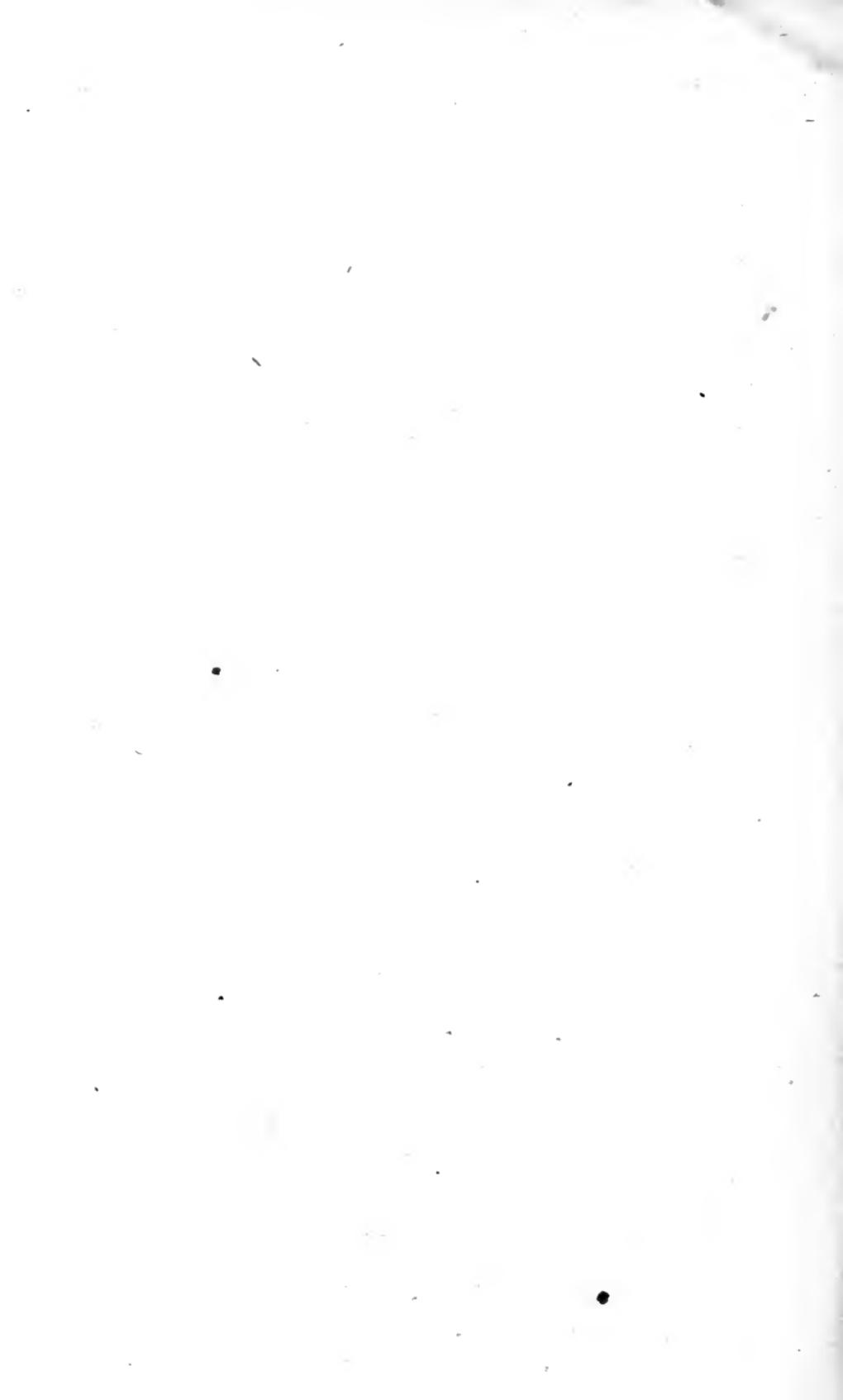
"Like my father," repeated Caleb, "who thought to make you his daughter; and died smiling in the thought."

"And he left you alone with what remains of his good people at the Mall," Yolande interposed, restlessly, but wistfully.

"Because you will not come to me, Yolande."

"I will come—I will come!" yielded Yolande suddenly, weeping in generous abandonment. "I have been unlike Grand'mère—what she would not have had me to be. I have forgotten you. What could hold me back from you?"

THE END.



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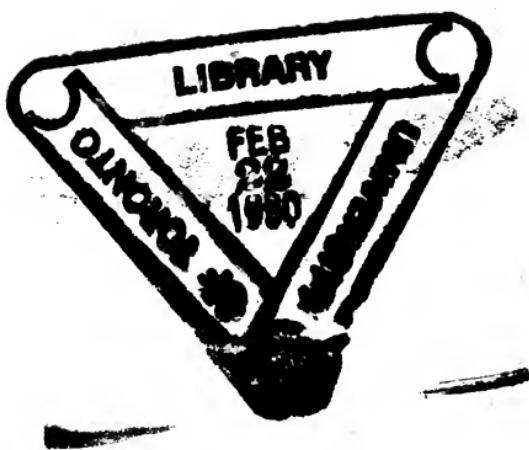
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